

AY, JANUARY 26-27, 1995

Major wants to ease Sunday drinking rules

LONDON (AP) — Prime Minister John Major said Tuesday he would do away with "old-fashioned" rules limiting the sale of alcohol on Sundays. Major, who was in favour of public houses staying open on Sunday, said he would like to see them open from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. on Sundays. He said he would like to see them open from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. on Sundays. He said he would like to see them open from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. on Sundays.

Irish on top in making babies

PARIS (AP) — Ireland is on top in making babies, according to a survey published Tuesday. The average Irish couple has 2.1 children, compared with 1.8 for the European average.

Dinner with Newt at \$50,000 a plate

WASHINGTON — President Bill Clinton's dinner with Newt Gingrich and other Republicans at the White House on Tuesday cost \$50,000 a plate, according to a report.

Pope: Films must turn against 'negative behaviour'

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope John Paul II said Tuesday that films must turn against "negative behaviour" and promote "positive values."

N. Carolina executes cheerleader

SALEM, N.C. (AP) — A North Carolina woman was executed Tuesday for the murder of a man who was her boyfriend. She was 21 years old at the time of the murder.

U.S. gives Kuwait two tankers

KUWAIT CITY (AP) — The United States navy has handed over to Kuwait two oil tankers intercepted in the Gulf in November for breaking the U.N. embargo on Iraq, an American official said Friday. The two ships — the Tasma Bay and the C.E. Stephens — were seized on Nov. 30 in international waters and given to Kuwait on Thursday, the commander of the U.S. Navy in Bahrain told AFP. The navy gave no details of the size of the tankers, the circumstances of their interception nor the country in which they were registered. On Nov. 6 Kuwait decided to sell the cargo of the Mahroussa, a Honduran-registered oil tanker intercepted on Oct. 21. The money from the sale went into the funds of the United Nations compensation committee, set up in 1991 to pay compensation to victims of Iraq's August 1990 invasion of Kuwait. The fund includes Iraqi assets frozen in various countries as a result of the U.N. embargo imposed on Baghdad after the invasion. The captain of the Mahroussa, Izzat Abdul Hadi Khalifa, said his tanker had unloaded 3,162 tonnes of fuel in Al Zubair port in southeastern Iraq between Oct. 16 and 19.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية مستقلة عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية. الراي.

U.S. warns Kurds to stop fighting

NICOSIA (AP) — Washington has warned rival Kurdish groups in northern Iraq to stop their fighting which threatens U.S.-led efforts to protect the region from Iraqi forces, an Arabic-language daily said Friday. Al Hayat said a U.S. State Department official visiting northern Iraq, David Lin, handed the leaders of the rival groups, Jalal Talabani and Masoud Barzani, a "sharply-worded" message from U.S. President Bill Clinton. Mr. Clinton "warned them against continuing the fighting which threatens the U.S. Presence in Kurdistan ..." and told them they had to take responsibility for the consequences, "the London-based newspaper said. Mr. Lin headed a joint Turkish-U.S. delegation to northern Iraq to meet Mr. Barzani of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and Mr. Talabani of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) on Wednesday. The Iraqi Broadcasting Corporation (IBC), which represents the Iraqi National Congress, an umbrella opposition movement including the KDP and PUK, said the delegation urged Mr. Barzani and Mr. Talabani to "accept INC mediation of their dispute in order to restore lasting peace to the liberated region of northern Iraq."

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Price: Jordan 150 Fils

Jardaneh stresses liberalisation push

AMMAN (Petra) — Finance Minister Basel Jardaneh said Friday Jordan seeks to liberalise its economy through eliminating all forms of bureaucracy and complications facing investors. At a ceremony organised by the Customs Department at the Fone Grand Hotel in Amman to mark International Customs Day, Mr. Jardaneh said the department should change its working mechanisms and offer more training for its teams not only in implementing laws, but also to give a good image of Jordan.

Ramadan office hours announced

AMMAN (Petra) — Ministries and government departments will be working from 9.30 a.m. till 2 p.m. during the Holy Month of Ramadan, expected to start Wednesday according to the lunar calendar. A communiqué issued by Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker urged government personnel to adhere to the norms of the Holy Month.

France urges end to settlements

PARIS (R) — France called on Israel on Friday to stop building settlements in the occupied West Bank, saying they hampered the peace process with Palestinians. "We believe that further settlements are incompatible with advances in the peace process," a foreign ministry spokeswoman told a regular press briefing. "Besides, settlements are contrary to the Geneva convention," she said.

Oman urges end to Iraq sanctions

MUSCAT (AFP) — Oman called on the international community Friday to end the embargo imposed on Iraq after its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait. "What is happening to the Iraqi people is a disgrace for Arabs. Iraq must be helped to overcome its mistakes and come out of its isolation," said Minister of Public Affairs Ali Ben Majid Al Muammar, in an interview with the daily Oman. Mr. Muammar also said Oman was "not rushing to establish ties with Israel." He said the sultanate was "only supporting Arab efforts to establish peace."

Ghali meets Peres, Musa in Zurich

GENEVA (R) — United Nations Secretary-General Boutros Ghali discussed the Middle East peace process on Friday with Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and his Egyptian counterpart Amr Musa, a U.N. statement said. The U.N. chief held 45-minute talks with the two ministers at Zurich airport before returning to New York, it added. "They had a discussion on the peace process in the Middle East," said the brief statement, which gave no details.

Israel expels 700 Palestinian workers

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Police have thrown out 700 Palestinians caught working in Israel since the West Bank and Gaza were sealed off Sunday night after a suicide bombing killed 30 people, the authorities said Friday. Police said the illegal workers were fined \$150 and taken back to the occupied West Bank or autonomous Gaza Strip. Police also fined 120 Israeli employers several hundred dollars each. Before the bombing claimed by Islamic Jihad in the Gaza Strip, some 50,000 Palestinian labourers had permits for Israel while between 10,000 and 20,000 more worked illegally.

Visit Al Dalal Bazaar at the Forte Grand Hotel From 23.1.1995 until 25.3.1995

Arafat describes agreements with Jordan as cementing ties

PLO leader leaves after signing accords; Israel says move positive despite reference to Palestinian state

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat flew out early Friday after a two-day visit, describing the agreements between Jordan and the PLO as a major step in enhancing bilateral ties. In pre-departure comments in Amman and again after arrival in Gaza following a brief stopover in Cairo, Mr. Arafat, chairman of the PLO and president of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), said Jordanian-Palestinian relations were positively advanced by the agreements. Israel said Friday it supported the agreements despite a clause that called for an independent Palestinian state. Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin said Israel saw the agreements as positive since they indicated a rapprochement between Jordan and the PLO. "As an Israeli, I would not sign the (agreement) because it mentions a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital," Mr. Beilin told Israel Radio. "But, apart from that, I think this agreement, also from our perspective, is not problematic and in principle is even positive," he said. However, Mr. Beilin also sought to advance an Israeli theme by suggesting that the agreement "could, in the long term, lead to a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation."

Prime Minister Shimon Peres said the agreement was a "positive step" and that Israel would continue to work for a comprehensive peace settlement in the Middle East. He said the agreement was a "positive step" and that Israel would continue to work for a comprehensive peace settlement in the Middle East. He said the agreement was a "positive step" and that Israel would continue to work for a comprehensive peace settlement in the Middle East.

Amman agreements belated, but still could help push for Arab strategy

By Lamis K. Andoni
Special to the Jordan Times

BY AGREEING on a joint strategy based on commitment to a comprehensive peace settlement in the Middle East, Jordan and the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) have achieved a breakthrough in bilateral and inter-Arab relations. But observers and analysts say that there are still many questions that need to be addressed particularly that such a joint strategy and co-operation agreement should have been reached before either side signed any agreement with Israel. The political agreement and the seven protocols of cooperation in different fields were signed between Jordan and the PNA on Thursday. The PNA is restrained by the limitations imposed by the self-rule accord between the Palestine Liberation Organisation and Israel. Jordan will have also taken into account its own peace treaty with Israel. Consequently, it is a foregone conclusion, according to analysts and politicians from both sides, that Jordan and the Palestinians could have had better deals with Israel if a joint strategy and plan of action were reached at the outset of the negotiating process with Israel three years ago. But now that the Palestinians are bound by the self-rule agreements, and Jordan has its own peace treaty to honour, the challenge will be how to reconcile the limitations imposed by the self-rule accord between the Palestine Liberation Organisation and Israel.

Saleh says S. Arabia massed border troops

SANAA (Agencies) — Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh said Friday Saudi Arabia had massed troops on the border with Yemen but pulled them back after Sanaa intervened with the Saudi authorities. "The Saudis massed large numbers of troops on the Yemeni border Wednesday but after contacts between our delegation and their brothers in Saudi Arabia their troops pulled back 10 to 15 kilometres towards the Boka region," Mr. Saleh told the BBC's Arabic service. He said the Saudis had moved two mechanised brigades and one armoured brigade towards the border. Diplomats in the Gulf and political sources in Sanaa said earlier Saudi Arabia had massed troops, tanks and missile batteries along the southwestern part of its border with Yemen. The troop movements followed renewed tension triggered by a Jan. 10 clash in which 40 Yemenis and 14 Saudis died, Western diplomats said. "The Saudi forces could be seen with the naked eye" near Al Boka, a northern Yemeni town with an airport, one official said. Diplomats said there had been fresh Saudi troop movements on Tuesday and Wednesday involving more than 60 tanks near Al Boka, close to the disputed border area. The diplomats also said at least 20 Saudi Apache attack helicopters were moved to a southern airbase at Khamis Musby, while three naval boats arrived off Jizan on the Red Sea. On Thursday, Yemeni officials discussing the dispute in Riyadh and Saudi Arabian official sources denied reports of renewed massing of troops on the border, the scene of several clashes in recent weeks. Yemeni political sources said Riyadh had also deployed F-15 and F-16 warplanes and attack helicopters in the region, and a Yemeni army officer told AFP the Saudis were "three kilometres from our first lines of defence."



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan bids farewell to Japanese Crown Prince Naruhito and Princess Masako on Friday (Petra photo)

Prince Naruhito, princess end visit to return home

Visit seen to reflect excellent ties

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Japanese Crown Prince Naruhito and Princess Masako headed home Friday after cutting short a visit to Jordan citing an urgent need to be in Japan, which is recovering from a deadly earthquake on Jan. 17 and facing the threat of more aftershocks. The two leaders will resume discussions on the subject (of Jerusalem) at a later stage, the spokesman said. Analysts said the very fact that Mr. Arafat signed the general agreement, whose preamble commits both sides to respect each other's (Continued on page 7)

As a result of the changed schedule, their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor hosted a lunch in honour of the Japanese couple on Friday instead of a dinner planned for Saturday night. Prince Naruhito and Princess Masako were seen off from Amman airport by their Royal Highnesses Crown Prince Hassan and Princess Sarvath, Her Royal Highness Princess Basma and several members of the Royal family and senior officials, including Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and the speakers of Parliament as well as Japanese Ambassador Yui Ikeda and diplomats. The Japanese prince and princess took off at 4.45 p.m. and were headed for Singapore, where they were to make a short stop before continuing their way home. The Japanese prince and princess were scheduled earlier to spend three days in (Continued on page 7)

Israeli army storms Abu Dis Islamic college

ABU DIS, occupied West Bank (Agencies) — Israeli troops stormed through an Islamic college on Friday, arresting students and ransacking dormitories in a crackdown against suspected militants following a suicide bombing earlier in the week. Separate male and female quarters at the college of science and technology at Abu Dis, in the occupied West Bank, were a mess of broken windows, scattered clothes and X's spray-painted by the army on room doors to mark those already searched. In the Gaza Strip on Friday, three Israeli soldiers were wounded in a shooting near Netzarim Jewish settlement, site of a suicide bombing in November that killed three soldiers. At Abu Dis, several students showed reporters cuts and scratches they said were caused by soldiers. They also displayed plastic handcuffs they said were used by the army. "We were sleeping at 2 a.m. and suddenly comes this glass and (they) break doors," one student said. "All of the students (came) out with bands like this," the student said, clapping them behind his head. Women students, wearing traditional white beads-carves, said they bolted for the women's bathroom when the soldiers entered their quarters. "They told us to go out, one by one," one said. "Girls — alone, (with) Jews around us." At least 30 students were arrested, college officials said. The army said those arrested belonged to Islamic militant groups. The pre-dawn raid was part of Israel's widening crackdown on hardliners after a suicide bombing Sunday that killed 20 Israelis, most of them teenage soldiers. The college of science and technology at Abu Dis is known as a stronghold for Islamic fundamentalism and the Israeli army said those arrested were members of the Hamas movement and the Islamic Jihad group that claimed responsibility for Sunday's attack. Muhammed Nusseibeh, director of the board of trustees at East Jerusalem's Al Ouds University that runs the college, denied the institution was a cover for militant groups. "People here have no time for activities outside their studies," Mr. Nusseibeh said, calling the raid unjustified. Students said soldiers scaled ladders and broke windows into the dormitory at 1 a.m. and at least one stun grenade was thrown, they said. "I was wearing my pajamas when I heard a bomb and soldiers breaking into my room. They grabbed me by the hair and told me to go into the bathroom," said Maysa Alami, a 19-year-old biology major. Students were questioned one by one. Some scuffled with the soldiers. The director of student affairs, Ziyad Abu Ilal, said four women were lightly hurt and hospitalized. Troops also searched the college library and two campus mosques, taking books, posters and magazines, students said. Reporters saw some 30 windows shattered, several broken door locks and mattresses strewn on the floor. "This attack on an academic institution is unjustified and does not help the peace process," said Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat's spokesman Nabil Abu Iredineh. Dean of Science and Technology Mustafa Hamis said computers were also broken and estimated the damage at 100,000 shekels (\$33,000). "The moral damage is more severe," he said. They humiliated our female students. The army said soldiers discovered "incriminating" material and offered to repair any damage. A military source said any unpleasantness was the result of "a belligerent population resisting arrests." (Continued on page 7)

(Continued on page 7)

Italian trade team leaves for Baghdad

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — An Italian trade delegation headed for Iraq on Friday for talks with Iraqi officials and businessmen on prospects of trade with Iraq in the second such exploratory visit in five months.

The delegation of nearly 40 Italian businessmen is headed by Sergio Marini, president of the Rome-based Arab-Italian Chamber of Commerce, who also attended a roundtable here last week on Jordanian-Iraqi trade and prospects for joint ventures.

The Arab-Italian Chamber of Commerce Organised similar visit to Iraq in September.

The delegation's visit comes amid indications that the Italian government might be willing to unfreeze part of Iraqi assets frozen in Italian banks in line with a United Nations Security Council resolution that imposed international sanctions against Iraq following the August 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

A subsequent Security Council resolution freed individual governments to decide for themselves to lift the freeze on Iraqi assets, but only a handful of countries have actually unfrozen the accounts.

It was not known whether the delegation was basing its discussions in Iraq on the expected release of assets.

Diego Brasili, charge d'affaires of the Italian embassy here, said his government was committed to honouring the international sanctions against Iraq. He said he had no information on any expected release of Iraqi assets held in Italy.

"The Italian embassy in

Libya: U.S., U.K. wage campaign

TRIPOLI (Agencies) — Libya on Friday accused Washington and London of waging a "campaign of terror" against Tripoli over the 1988 Lockerbie plane bombing although a report cleared the country of involvement in the attack.

"Washington and London are exploiting the Lockerbie incident to lead a provocative campaign of terror against Libya and to impose unjust sanctions," the official news agency JANA charged.

It argued that a U.S. intelligence document, released under the Freedom of Information Act, had exonerated Libya by pointing the finger at an Iranian cleric and former interior minister, Ali Akbar Mohtashemi.

"It's becoming obvious that the main reason for this U.S.-British campaign of lies is to strike at Libya, a bastion of Arab nationalism, and to push through the process of surrender," JANA said, referring to the peace process.

Libya is a fierce opponent of the U.S.-backed Arab-Israeli peace talks.

On Tuesday, Libya called for the lifting of U.N. sanctions imposed in April 1992 in connection with the Lockerbie bombing, citing the State Department document reported in a Scottish newspaper.

The Daily Record reported that newly-released U.S. intelligence documents implicated Iran, not Libya, in the explosion of the Jumbo jet over the Scottish village of Lockerbie.

Tehran's aim, the paper said, was to avenge the shooting down of an Iranian Airbus over the Gulf in 1988 by the U.S. Navy. The United States insists it was shot down by mistake.

But both Britain and the United States said Thursday they were still convinced Libya alone was behind the mid-air Lockerbie attack which cost 270 lives.

Evidence still supports

British and U.S. indictments against two Libyans in the bombing, British Prime Minister John Major said, adding, "There is no evidence to establish that other persons or nations were involved."

The U.S. State Department said in Washington that it was still certain Libyan agents were responsible for the Lockerbie bombing, calling the report implicating Iran unfounded.

Washington at first considered the possibility Iran was involved, said a State Department spokesman, but "after an exhaustive three-year investigation, we've not uncovered any credible evidence to support such a conclusion."

"The evidence linking Libyans agents to the blast is conclusive," charged the spokesman.

Mr. Major told parliament that Scottish legal authorities who are investigating the case were convinced that the evidence pointed clearly to two Libyans.

But Mr. Major told Mr. Dalrymple in a written reply: "The document in question quotes a source relying on second and third party information and stating that the former Iranian interior minister paid \$10 million to have the Lockerbie bombing carried out."

"Allegations to this effect were first made early in the investigation they were examined at the time by the competent authorities together with a great deal of other often contradictory material, but no evidence has been found to substantiate them."

British officials earlier this week also dismissed the report as "dud intelligence."

Scottish police said Thursday they were drawing up a comprehensive contingency plan in case the two Libyans accused of the bombing were surrendered to Britain.

NEWS IN BRIEF

'Egypt's army strong enough' — defence chief

CAIRO (AFP) — The Egyptian army is strong enough to repel any attack by a would-be aggressor, Defence Minister Mohammed Hussein Tantawi said Thursday. "To keep the peace we have to keep up the capacity to dissuade all those who try to attack Egypt. We want peace and we will defend it," he said at a military ceremony, according to the official agency MENA. But he added that "successful peace has to be based on that of the strong not of the weak." The commander of forces along the Suez Canal, General Sada Abu Rida, said that those who wanted to harm Egypt "must know that it has the weapons capable of punishing those that take a single step onto" Egyptian soil. The comments came amid a war of words between Egypt and Israel over the Jewish state's nuclear arsenal.

Parents demand Red Cross access to Israeli jail

BEIRUT (AFP) — Parents of Lebanese prisoners being held in an Israeli jail in southern Lebanon staged a sit-down protest outside government headquarters here Thursday calling for the Red Cross to be allowed to visit it. Israel has barred groups such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) from visiting Khiam jail where about 300 Lebanese are detained, according to a prisoners support group. The group, a monitoring committee, said conditions inside the jail had deteriorated and "three prisoners have died of torture recently." The parents group also criticised the "lax" attitude of the Lebanese government, calling on it to "start an international campaign so that the detainees are treated like prisoners of war." One 28-year-old, held for 10 years without trial, died on Jan. 16 in hospital and two others died in December shortly after their release, the committee said. It quoted former detainees as saying "at least 14 prisoners are wallowing in terrible conditions even though they need hospital treatment." Amnesty International has repeatedly condemned the jail in Israel's self-declared "security zone" and said that according to former prisoners "torture is used."

Denktash to run for reelection after all

ANKARA (AFP) — Veteran Turkish-Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash announced Friday that he would run for reelection in April on the divided island, after several months of saying he would step down. The Turkish-Cypriot news agency TAK, monitored here, said Mr. Denktash made the announcement to journalists. Denktash, 71, has been president of the breakaway Turkish republic of northern Cyprus since it was established in 1983. It is recognised only by Ankara. Having already led the Turkish-Cypriot community for more than 30 years, he said last year that he would not run in presidential elections due to take place on April 16. A U.N. presidential envoy said Wednesday a settlement on Cyprus remained elusive, as Nicosia said his talks with Mr. Denktash and President Glafos Clerides, a Greek-Cypriot, had failed to break a longstanding deadlock.

Ramos plans Mideast, European tour

MANILA (AFP) — Philippine President Fidel Ramos plans to go on a nine-day, five-nation tour of the Middle East and Europe in mid-March, a senior presidential palace official said Friday. The first two stops will be Iran and Turkey to drum up support for Manila's bid to gain observer status in the organisation of the Islamic Conference, said the official who would not be named. The Philippines is predominantly Roman Catholic but has a large Muslim minority. The government is conducting peace talks with the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), which launched a separatist uprising in the south in the early 1970s. Mr. Ramos will also visit Denmark, the Netherlands and Britain to campaign for more foreign investment in the Philippines, the official said.

Six beheaded in Saudi Arabia

RIYADH (AFP) — Four expatriates and two Saudi convicts were beheaded on Friday for drug-smuggling and murder, the Saudi interior ministry said. Three expatriates from Pakistan, Nigeria and Chad were executed in the Red Sea city of Jeddah for smuggling heroin and hashish into the kingdom, said the ministry in a statement broadcast on state television. Three others — an Egyptian and two Saudis — were beheaded in Riyadh, the western town of Hael and Assir in the south, on separate charges of murder. Ten people have been executed in Saudi Arabia so far this year, according to a toll compiled from official announcements. Last year, 58 people were beheaded.

Mubarak to visit Japan in March

TOKYO (AFP) — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak will make a state visit to Japan in March, a foreign ministry source was quoted as saying here Friday. Mr. Mubarak cancelled a planned visit to Japan in May last year because of Morihiro Hosokawa's sudden resignation as Japanese prime minister. Japanese Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama is expected to seek Egypt's further efforts for Middle East peace when he meets Mr. Mubarak here, Jiji Press said, adding the Egyptian leader would arrive on March 13.

Tehran police block protest

TEHRAN (AFP) — Police on Friday prevented Islamic demonstrators from protesting in front of the Russian embassy against the military assault on the breakaway republic of Chechnya. Several hundred people left prayers at Tehran University and marched towards the embassy in downtown Tehran to condemn what they termed the "massacre" in the Muslim-majority territory, correspondents reported. But they were stopped by helmeted and baton-wielding policemen blocking roads leading to the compound. The demonstration, organised by Islamic students associations, dispersed without incident.

U.S. urges cooperation in Mideast on environment

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A one-hour Worldnet dialogue on "The Protection of Environment in the Middle East" linking participants from the U.S., Jordan, Egypt, Bahrain and Qatar via television satellite, was held at the United States Information Service Wednesday.

Participants from the Middle East addressed questions relating to the Bahrain Environmental Code of Conduct for the Middle East, a document establishing regional environmental standards, principles and guidelines, which was endorsed by the Middle East multilateral working group on the environment at its meeting in Bahrain in October 1994, to the head of the U.S. delegation to the multilateral environmental working group, Donald Bandler, in Washington.

The Jordanian audience voiced concern about the threat to environmental security and stability in the region posed by Israel's refusal to sign and Egypt's refusal so far to renew its commitment to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), as well as reports of Iran's growing nuclear activity.

Mr. Bandler declared this concern to be somewhat "beyond the discussion on the environment," but pointed out that hazardous waste, one of the results of nuclear activity, had been an item on the agenda of the Bahrain meeting. A discussion on the laws and regulations of participating nations would be an issue at forthcoming meetings of the multi-

U.S. says Iran seeks nuke option

UNITED NATIONS (R) — The United States believes Iran has decided to pursue a nuclear weapons option although it is currently in full compliance with the 1970 Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), a top U.S. arms official said Thursday.

"The United States believes that Iran has taken a decision to pursue a nuclear weapons option, even though they are a party to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)," Ambassador Thomas Graham told a news conference.

"Right now, Iran is fully in compliance with all of its NPT obligations. It is their intentions that concern us, not their current compliance with NPT obligations," he added.

Mr. Graham, the U.S. president's special representative for arms control and disarmament affairs, heads the U.S. delegation to a committee preparing for a conference scheduled for April 17 to May 12 to decide about extending the NPT.

The options are an indefinite extension or an extension for one or more fixed periods, after which the treaty could lapse.

The United States, most other Western countries and

Russia want an indefinite, unconditional extension of the 25-year-old treaty.

Mr. Graham estimated this had the support so far of various groups and organisations accounting for 60 to 65 votes — short of the required 86 representing a clear majority of the 170 countries bound by the NPT.

But he added: "There are many other countries around the world that are favourably disposed... and we believe that world that are favourably disposed... and we believe that we will have a significant majority of the states parties (to the treaty) prepared to vote for indefinite extension by the time the vote is held."

Under the treaty, non-nuclear weapons states pledged not to acquire such arms and to submit to inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

The acknowledged nuclear powers — the United States, Russia, Britain, France and China — agreed to pursue good faith negotiations towards ending the arms race and to share the benefits of peaceful nuclear technology.

Many non-nuclear states feel the nuclear powers have not lived up to their end of the bargain, as evidenced by

Somali warlords pledge peace during U.N. pullout

NAIROBI (R) — Senior U.S. officials said they won pledges on Thursday from Somalia's main warlords not to attack a U.S.-led task force shielding the withdrawal of United Nations troops from the Horn of Africa country.

But they said if the warlords failed to keep their word or could not control other militias in Somalia, the multi-national force would have the firepower to respond to "any eventuality."

The U.N. Security Council has set next March 31 as its deadline for the pullout of remaining U.N. peacekeepers and civilian staff from Somalia.

The withdrawal, code-named "United Shield" and involving about 18 navy vessels, will end a \$1 billion-a-year operation which began in December 1992 and failed to bring peace to the devastated country.

Most experts predict clan warfare will erupt with a vengeance as the last of the 9,000 troops still in the U.N. Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) sails off into the Indian Ocean.

David Simpson, U.S.

ambassador to Somalia, said the U.S. team met five warlords and 50 lesser leaders in the Somali capital during Thursday's day trip.

"Basically all the five leaders pledged not to interfere with our role in UNOSOM troop withdrawal... and in fact promised cooperation," Mr. Simpson told a news conference in Nairobi.

Vice Admiral Scott Redd, who will command the force, said between 7,000-8,000 U.S. naval and military personnel would take part in the operation. Britain, France, Italy, Malaysia and Pakistan had so far agreed to join the task force under U.S. command, he said.

The pullout of troops and their hardware would take not more than seven days after the task force had established a safe perimeter on the mainland at the seaport and airport, he said.

Adm. Redd declined to say when it would begin but added he would make the March 31 deadline "with time to spare."

"The bottom line is we plan for the worst and hope for the best," Adm. Redd

First art e

AMMAN — Agaba's first art exhibition, with 20 paintings by Syrian artist Hala Al-Hajj, Friday was opened by Her Royal Highness Princess Rajwa Bint Ali. The artist, owner of Khaldoun Studio from Fuha, told the Jordan Times that the exhibition will run for a month, and it will be followed by more exhibitions, of each lasting a month, of Arab and European artists.

Mr. Dawud said he "regrets that there is no cultural life outside Amman" for in excess to art.

He opened the exhibition in Agaba because he wanted to bring art to Agaba residents and because he felt that artists to the Red Sea Port.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel: 773111-19	
PROGRAMME TWO	
17:00	Cosmic Minutes
17:30	Que Le Milleur Gagne
18:00	L'Histoire Du Cirque
18:30	Le Monde Fantastique Ou Es-tu?
19:00	News in French
19:15	Fa Ut Pas Revra
19:30	Harry and Hendersons
20:30	Innovations
21:15	Quantum Leap
21:30	Murder She Wrote
22:00	News in English
22:20	Feature film: "Country"
23:59	Major Duty
PRAYER TIMES	
06:08	Duha
06:32	(Sunrise) Fajr
11:44	Dhuhr
14:44	'Asr
17:09	Maghreb
18:29	'Isha
CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church, Sweidat, Tel. 810740	
Assembly of God Church, Tel. 637785	
St. Joseph Church, Tel. 624590	
Church of the Annunciation, Tel. 637440	
De la Salle Church, Tel. 661737	
Terrasanta Church, Tel. 623366	
Church of the Annunciation, Tel. 623541	
Anglican Church, Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543	
Armenian Catholic Church, Tel. 771331	
Armenian Orthodox Church, Tel. 772561	
St. Ephraim Church, Tel. 771751	
Armenian International Church, Tel. 625226	
Evangelical Lutheran Church, Tel. 624328	
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation, Tel. 644195	
The Latter-Day Saints, Tel. 654932	
Church of Nazareth, Tel. 675691	
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman, Tel. 811295	
WEATHER	
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.	
It will be sunny in the morning. Skies will be cloudy in the afternoon with a chance of showers in the northern and central parts of the Kingdom. Temperatures are expected to drop slightly with winds westerly moderate. In Agaba, moderate weather conditions with prevail with winds northerly moderate and seas calm.	

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR	
USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS	
NIGHT DUTY	
AMMAN:	
Dr. Hisham Kan'an	782386
Dr. Jamal Jarrah	847351
Dr. Walid Al Masri	675455
Dr. Abdul Wahab Awad	846070
First pharmacy	661912
First pharmacy	783336
Al Asoma pharmacy	637055
Nairookh pharmacy	626072
Al Salam pharmacy	626730
Yacoub pharmacy	640445
Shmeitan pharmacy	647660
Najib pharmacy	647632
IBBID:	
Dr. Mohammad Al Hila	279773
Akuds pharmacy	(-)
ZARQA:	
Dr. Ghassan Al Faghi	906150
Khalid pharmacy	955417
EMERGENCIES	
Food Control Centre	637111
Civil Defence Department	661111
Civil Defence Immediate	664281-6
Police	630341
Civil Defence Emergency	100
Rescue Police	112, 111, 637277
Fire Brigade	617101
Blood Bank	775121
Highway Police	824002
Traffic Police	896190
Public Security Department	638221
Hotel Complaints	605900
Price Complaints	661176
Water and Sewerage	877467
Complaints	637111
Amman Municipality	637111
Complaints	637111
Telephone Information	121
Overseas Calls	010730
Central Amman Telephone	637055
Repairs	623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs	661101
Jordan Television	773111
Radio Jordan	774111
Water Authority	661101
Jordan Electricity Authority	815615
Electric Power	636351
Complaints	636351
RJ Flight Information	
Queen Alia Int'l. Airport	08-33200
08-33200	
HOSPITALS	
AMMAN:	
Hussein Medical Centre	813813-32
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn	664281-6
Aklich Maternity, J. Amn	664241-2
Jabal Amman Maternity	642642
Malhas, J. Amman	636140
Palestine, Shmeitan	664171-4
Shmeitan Hospital	666131
Al-Muhsin Hospital	845845
Al-Muhsin Hospital	667227-9
The Islamic, Abdali	666173-7
Al-Ahli, Abdali	666104-0
Islamic, Al-Muhsin	771017-3
Al-Bashir, Al-Ashraf	771111-2
Arms, Marka	891611-5
Queen Alia Hospital	662405-0
Al-Hospital	674155
ZARQA:	
Zarqa Govt. Hospital	09983523
Zarqa National Hospital	09900540
Ibn Sina Hospital	09986632
Al-Bashir Modern Hospital	09999990
IBBID:	
Princess Bama Hospital	01027555
Grac Hospital	01027275
Ibn Al-Nafes Hospital	010274100
AOA	
Princess Haya Hospital	010214111
FOR THE TRAVELLER	
QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT	
ARRIVALS	
Royal Jordanian (RJ)	
Flights (Terminal 1)	
06:45	Jakarta, Singapore (RJ)
07:15	Agaba (RJ)
07:45	New Delhi (RJ)
08:15	Karachi, Dubai (RJ)
08:45	Beirut (RJ)
09:15	Colombo (RJ)
09:45	New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
10:15	Jeddah (RJ)
10:45	Dubai (RJ)
11:15	London, Berlin (RJ)
11:45	Frankfurt, Vienna (RJ)
12:15	London, Agaba (RJ)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)	
04:20	Vienna (OS)
14:10	Rome, Damascus (MZ)
18:15	Dubai (EK)
19:00	Sanaa (Y)
19:30	Larnaca (CY)
21:55	Paris, Damascus (AF)
DEPARTURES	
Royal Jordanian (RJ)	
Flights (Terminal 1)	
06:25	Beirut (RJ)
07:00	Agaba (RJ)
07:30	Jeddah (RJ)
11:15	Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
11:45	Geneva, Madrid (RJ)
12:00	Paris, Brussels (RJ)
12:30	London (RJ)
12:45	Cairo (RJ)
13:45	Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
20:05	Larnaca (RJ)
20:30	Jeddah (RJ)
20:40	Damascus (RJ)
21:25	Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
04:10	London (RJ)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)	
07:30	Larnaca, Rome (AZ)
15:50	Beirut (ME)
17:45	Vienna (OS)
18:15	Dubai (EK)
20:00	Sanaa (Y)
22:00	Larnaca (CY)
23:00	Cairo (MS)
23:50	Damascus, Paris (AF)
23:59	Amsterdam (KL)
02:30	London (BA)
02:35	Athens (OA)
HUAZ RAILWAY TRAIN	
Dep. Amman: 8:00 a.m. every Monday	
Arr. Damascus: 5:00 p.m. every Monday	
Dep. Damascus: 7:30 a.m. every Sunday	
Arr. Amman: 5:00 p.m. every Sunday	
MARKET PRICES	
Upper/lower price in fils per kg.	
Apple	700/400
Banana (Mukammal)	600
Cabbage	160/100
Carrot	240/140
Cauliflower	120/60
Cucumbers (large)	200/150
Cucumbers (small)	420/350
Pepper (bold)	740/500
Eggplant	280/180
Garlic	840/500
Grape Fruit	180/160
Leemon	320/180
Marrow (large)	150/100
Marrow (small)	320/200
Onion (green)	350/200
Onion (dry)	340/200
Pepper (bold)	740/500
Orange	320/250
Pepper (sweet)	320/250
Potato	300/200
Radish	160/100
Spinach	150/100
String Beans	620/400
Tomato	320/170

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR	
USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS	
NIGHT DUTY	
AMMAN:	
Dr. Hisham Kan'an	782386
Dr. Jamal Jarrah	847351
Dr. Walid Al Masri	675455
Dr. Abdul Wahab Awad	846070
First pharmacy	661912
First pharmacy	783336
Al Asoma pharmacy	637055
Nairookh pharmacy	626072
Al Salam pharmacy	626730
Yacoub pharmacy	640445
Shmeitan pharmacy	647660
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Repairs	623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs	661

Princess Sarvath, Princess Masako visit JNRCS: Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath Friday presents Her Imperial Highness Princess Masako of Japan with the Jordan National Red Crescent Society's (JNRCS) shield after the Japanese princess opened a radiology section at the JNRCS hospital in Amman. The section was equipped through contributions from the Japanese government and the Japanese Red Cross Society. The equipment presented to the hospital, worth about \$210,000, includes X-ray machines, incubators, and ultrasound machines.



Britain pledges help with Jordan's foreign debt

LONDON (Petra) — British Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Douglas Hogg told a visiting Jordanian parliamentary delegation that his country understands the difficulties facing the Jordanian economy and will continue to help endeavours to deal with its foreign debt.

Mr. Hogg expressed Britain's concern over Israel's nuclear weapons and said that London was continuing to apply pressure on the Jewish state to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

He also voiced his country's call on Israel to halt its Jewish settlement programmes in Arab lands and to arrange for Palestinian elections in implementation of the requirements of the peace process.

The head of the Jordanian delegation, Senator Marwan Hmoud, told Mr. Hogg that Jordan was continually facing economic, financial and political pressures as a result of the Gulf crisis.

Mr. Hmoud called on Britain to extend economic and financial assistance to the Kingdom to help it cope with its heavy burdens.

Discussion also covered the democratic process in the Kingdom, Jordan's peace treaty with Israel and economic matters.

The Jordanian delegation had visited the British parliament and met with members of the ruling Conservative and the opposition Labour parties for similar discussions.



Marwan Hmoud

Douglas Hogg

Israeli-Arabs, ICRC pledge new efforts to help people of Chechnya

By Cathy King
Special to the Jordan Times
AMMAN — The Jordanian Committee for the Support of the People of the Independent Caucasus Republic (JSCSP) has launched a new appeal urgently requesting medical supplies, medicine and medical equipment for the people of Chechnya.

The request for humanitarian aid aims to "reduce the suffering of a small Muslim people exposed to unjust aggression," said a statement signed by JSCSP Chairman Said Bino.

Meanwhile a delegation of Israeli-Arabs visited the JSCSP centre in Swelth Thursday to learn more about the situation in Chechnya, Mr. Bino told the Jordan Times.

The delegation, headed

by Um Al Fahm Mayor Ra'ed Salah, has pledged support for the Chechen cause and said that he would endeavour to collect humanitarian aid, Mr. Bino said.

"The delegation is willing to cooperate with the committee here and is planning to collect donations to help those suffering in Chechnya," Mr. Bino added.

Mr. Bino said that long-term assistance is also required to redevelop the damaged areas in the Caucasian republic which has been under attack by Russian forces for over six weeks.

According to Mr. Bino, the Arab-Israeli delegation intends to hold peaceful demonstrations during the month of Ramadan in various towns in Israel to highlight the plight of the

Chechen people.

In the meantime, the ICRC announced Thursday it had launched a tracing programme to locate missing family members and has begun to set up a network for the exchange of family news.

A statement said that the civilian population in Chechnya has no means of communication. Displaced persons inside Chechnya and those that have fled to the neighbouring Republic of Ingushia and Daghestan in southern Russia are impossible to contact, the statement added.

"(ICRC) delegates are coordinating their efforts with the civilian authorities of every district in Chechnya and with the local Red Cross and Red Crescent that collect and distribute the messages," the statement explained.

adding that Grozny is the only town in which the mail service cannot operate.

The ICRC anticipates difficulties in implementing the tracing programme given the "precarious security conditions" and that most of those displaced do not have permanent addresses.

ICRC delegates running the mail service are therefore encouraging people in the conflict zones to send messages to relatives outside Chechnya to reassure them of their fate. The statement reported that the population and local authorities have reacted positively to this "humanitarian service."

Communication facilities (postal and telephone services) are still operational in Ingushia and Daghestan, allowing contacts with the outside world.

ESCWA introduces work plan to establish 'business incubators'

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times
AMMAN — The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) presented a work plan to establish a "business or industrial incubator" for women entrepreneurs during a lecture Thursday at the Amman Chamber of Commerce.

The business incubator, a new concept to help small businesses get started, provides a setting where small enterprises can use industrial machinery rather than making costly capital expenditure to purchase such equipment.

The work plan suggested establishing a task force to provide overall guidance. This task force would consist of representatives from ESCWA, the Business and Professional Women's Club (BPWC) and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and other potential sponsors.

The plan suggested undertaking a sample field survey of women's entrepreneurial profiles and needs, women's characteristics, and support and advisory services needed. The sample would cover existing and potential entrepreneurs.

The paper also recommended assessing the role

and impact of selected Jordanian institutions involved in the development, promotion of and support for small enterprises.

In addition, the plan also implied designing the incubator on the basis of the results of the field survey as well as on the assessment made of Jordanian institutions.

The work plan proposed finding a location of the business incubator preparing a business plan and organising a workshop for prospective tenants and sponsors.

Zohra Merabet, regional programme advisor for UNIFEM, said that a survey was recently conducted on 750 women from banks, commercial sectors and associations such as the BPWC to help design an incubation system.

"The objective of this study was to assess the needs and problems of women entrepreneurs in Jordan," Ms. Merabet said addressing the participants who represented banks, ministers and the industrial sectors.

According to Ms. Merabet, the study revealed several important facts concerning women who own and operate small businesses.

One, she pointed out is that 44 per cent of the businesses are sole ownership, 65 per cent of the

businesses were less than five-years-old, 47.5 per cent of the women who own businesses were between the ages of 30 to 39, and 46 per cent of the women surveyed had a university degree.

According to Ms. Merabet, the study concluded that women entrepreneurs are still invisible in the Jordanian economy, and that the existing data base should be used for further statistical analysis of managerial aspects and listed problems.

In addition, Ms. Merabet said, the result of the survey does not apply to all women entrepreneurs in Jordan, "it is rather an indication where we can move within a specific framework."

During the lecture, Zaki Ayoubi, the economic advisor at the BPWC, listed the requirements for a business incubator.

"One of the main demands for this project to succeed is having Jordanian government institutions such as the Amman Municipality and others support and adopt the project," Dr. Ayoubi said.

In addition, he said, capital is another requirement.

Finding a suitable location and running the project as if it is a business project with legislation governing the project, he

said, is also essential.

Hussein Sharif, director of the industrial section at ESCWA said that in the early 1980s, the concentration was on large industries while small industries were neglected.

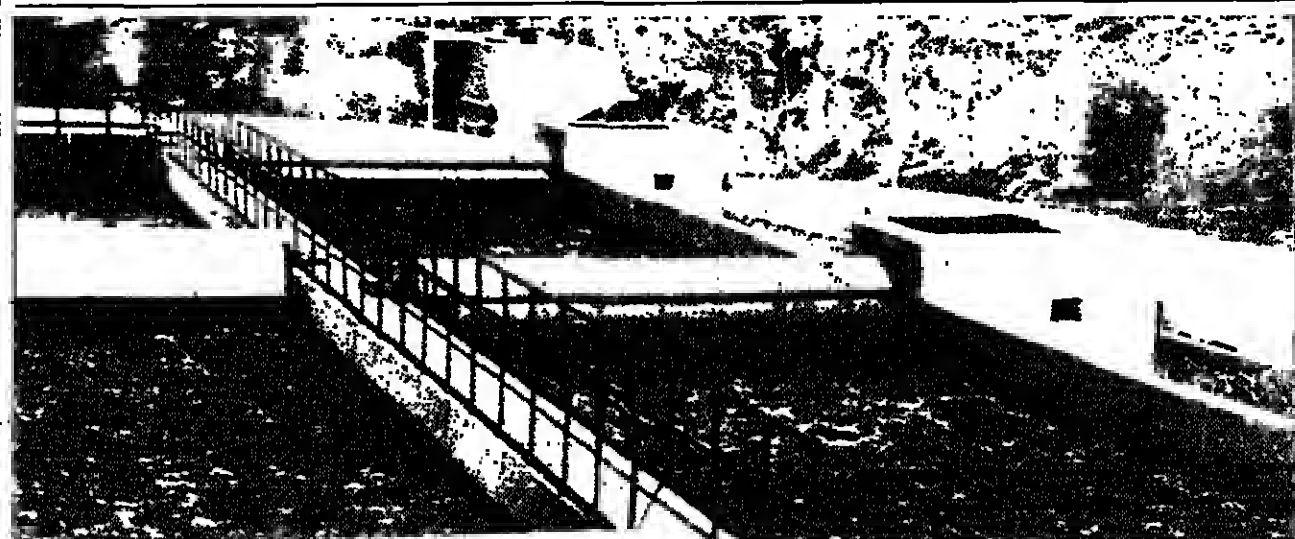
According to Dr. Sharif, recent statistics released by the U.N. indicated that 50 to 70 per cent of new enterprises will be forced to stop operations after one year of establishment, "and this is a high rate," he added.

"The idea of the business incubators arose because many small businesses lack financial and managerial experience, but the business incubator can provide facilities and support such as institutes," Dr. Sharif explained.

The lecture, which was organised by the BPWC in coordination with ESCWA and UNIFEM was attended by representatives of government.

UNIFEM will hold a three-day workshop related to the same issue and will focus on broad topics concerning all sectors which influence and strengthen enterprises and their employees' performance.

The workshop, to be held at the Jordanian Inter-Continental Hotel will be attended by more than 30 representatives of ministries, banks, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).



A waste water treatment plant in Jerash

Water ministry to sign agreement to boost treatment plant efficiency

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Water and Irrigation tomorrow will sign an agreement with a consortium of local and foreign companies to carry out a project to boost the efficiency of the Khirbet Al Samra Waste Water Treatment Plant near Zarqa, according to Saleh Irshaidat, minister of water and irrigation.

Speaking during an inspection tour of the plant Thursday, the minister said that the \$10.6 million project will be financed from a grant from

the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

Upon completion of the project, in two years, the ministry will begin a parallel project which entails laying a 40-kilometre pipeline to carry waste water from Ain Ghazal Waste Water Plant near Amman to Khirbet Al Samra plant because the existing line can no longer cope with the increasing amounts of effluence, said Dr. Irshaidat.

He said the new pipeline would cost around JD 31.5

million and will be financed from a soft loan from the German government. The laying of the pipeline will take an entire year.

In justifying the measures, the minister said that population growth in the Amman region has brought about additional pressure on the Khirbet Al Samra plant.

The plant, which was built by the Jordanian government at the cost of JD 17 million in 1985 was designed to treat 6,800 cubic metres of waste effluence per day, but

according to the minister, the effluence has increased to 191 per cent in 1994, causing more concentration of organic substances to appear in the treated water coming out from the plant.

The ministry also plans to build installations at Ain Ghazal plant to boost its performance, minimise the stretch from the plant and better absorb the effluence arriving there from the greater Amman area, said Dr. Irshaidat.

First art exhibition opens in Aqaba

AMMAN — Aqaba's first art exhibition, with 20 paintings by Syrian artist Hala Mahayni, Friday was opened by Her Royal Highness Princess Rajwa Bint Ali. The organiser of the exhibition, gallery owner Khaldoun Dawud from Fuha, told the Jordan Times that the exhibition will run for a month, and that it will be followed by more exhibitions, each lasting a month, of Arab and European artists.

Mr. Dawud said he "regrets that there is no cultural life outside Amman," for in his view, "people must have access to art."

He opened the exhibition in Aqaba because he wanted to bring art to Aqaba residents and because he felt that visitors to the Red Sea Port,

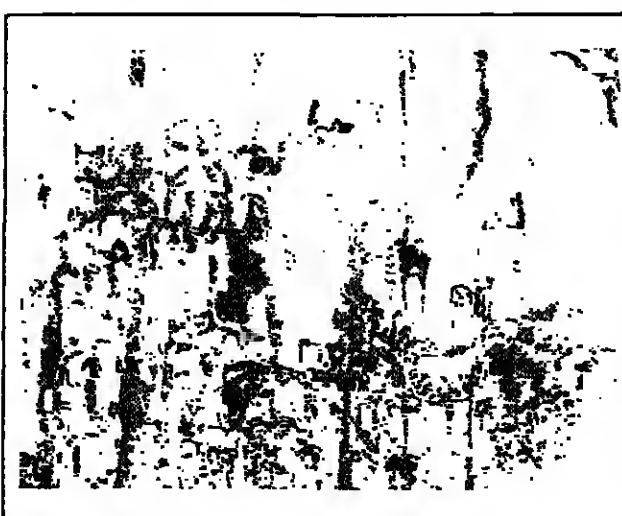
foreigners and Jordanians alike, should find art in the city.

The exhibition is housed in the foyer of the Petra International Hotel.

Asked why he chose a hotel as the venue for his exhibition, Mr. Dawud replied that he could not find a more suitable location to display the paintings.

The unfortunate result is that, according to the observations of hotel manager Bassam Ismail, mostly tourists have come to see the exhibition so far.

But Mr. Dawud said he hopes that interest among the local population will grow as the word spreads and exhibitions become a regular feature of the resort town's cultural life.



Painting by Hala Mahayni

Seminar reviews study on reality of women's lives

AMMAN (Petra) — More than 20 prominent professional women participated in a seminar on the reality of Jordanian women's lives at the Queen Alia Fund for Social Development.

The seminar, chaired by Her Royal Highness Princess Basma and organised by the coordinating office for the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in September, was part of a study on the situation of women in Jordan conducted by a team of experts led by researcher Nawal Hashisho and Sociologist Sari Nasser.

The study will be presented at the women's conference and includes an evaluation of

women's lives in the eight dimensions identified by the United Nations.

These are: women and decision-making; women's share of education, health and employment; women and economic decision-making; the effects of poverty on women; violence against women; the effects of wars and internal conflicts on women; awareness of women's rights and abilities; and the mechanisms and programmes to advance women at a national level.

The seminar participants included women from several walks of life, all of whom contributed their experience and expertise to the seminar.

Council approves new food, medicine plants

AMMAN (Petra) — The Development Council, recently formed by the Cabinet, has approved four new projects as certified economic schemes, entitling them to exemptions from customs duty and other privileges, according to Agriculture Minister Mansour Ben Tarif Friday.

The minister said the projects, which will have a total capital of JD 6.5 million are considered useful to the economy, particularly to the country's agro-industry.

According to Mr. Ben Tarif, one of the projects involves the establishment a

plant to produce frozen French fried and mashed potatoes. The plant is expected to cost of JD 3 million.

Another similar plant will produce cooked and frozen French fried potatoes. It is expected to cost of JD 2 million.

Two other plants will produce veterinary medicines; one is to be located at Qastal and have a JD 1 million capital, the other is to be set up at Sahab Industrial City at a cost of JD 500,000.

The minister said he expects such projects will cut imports of similar products

WHAT'S GOING ON

THIRD JORDANIAN DRAMA FESTIVAL

★ Play (in Arabic) entitled "Ya Sam'een" (Ye Who Are Hearing) at the Royal Cultural Centre at 5:00 p.m.

LECTURE

★ Lecture (in Arabic) entitled "Has the Political and Economic Role of the Arab Oil Really Gone?" by Dr. Mamduh Salameh at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation at 6:00 p.m.

FOOD BAZAAR

★ Food bazaar (including cakes, maffoot, pickles, labaneh and zaatar, lemonade, and orangeade, and others) at the Al Ahlyyah School, Jabal Amman on Sunday (11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.).

NOVEL RECITAL

★ Novel recital by novelist Yousef Damra at the Phoenix Gallery for Culture and Art at 6:30 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Exhibition of pastel, watercolour, oil paintings and photography by Jordanian artist Maral Mahredjtan at the Watani Sporting Club, Amman.
- ★ Photographic exhibition entitled "To Be or Not to Be — Industry Destroys Nature" at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of abstract art by Mohammad Labadi at Alla Art Gallery.
- ★ Exhibition of Children's works (from Haya Centre drawing and painting classes) at Goethe Institute.
- ★ Exhibition of works by Iraqi artist Fakhr Muhammad at the Ab'ad Art Gallery.

Jordan Cancer Society to begin nation-wide awareness campaign

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The health awareness committee of the Jordan Cancer Society (JCS) will start a nation-wide campaign to promote the importance of early detection and medical check-ups in the diagnosis and treatment of cancer.

shows and seminars to be conducted at secondary schools for girls, universities and women's societies in the country.

The campaign which is to be launched shortly, will focus on educating women on how to conduct breast self-examinations to check for breast tumours, Dr. Khatib told the Jordan Times.

Nearly 90 per cent of the women in the Kingdom do not conduct regular self-

examinations; often breast cancer is discovered too late, said Dr. Khatib.

The campaign will urge women to see their doctors if they suspect anything unusual or detect any unusual growths or bleeding, said Dr. Khatib.

The committee plans to extend its campaign to hospitals where committee specialists will lecture nurses on what Dr. Khatib called the "management of pain" and the treatment of cancer patients.

Dr. Khatib said that the country lacks a national registry of cancer cases and that such a data would be useful in the fight against the disease.

He said that in 1993 alone the number of new cancer cases registered at Al Bashir Hospital was 1,350.

He said that with the growing number of cancer cases the JCS committee plans to carry out more awareness campaigns.

Christopher blasts Republican bid to reduce peacekeeping role

WASHINGTON (AP) — Secretary of State Warren Christopher told the new congressional majority that its attempt to cut back U.S. involvement in U.N. peacekeeping risks leaving the United States with a choice between "acting alone or doing nothing."

With blunt language, Mr. Christopher also said Thursday that a Republican proposal to require congressional approval to send American troops aboard in a U.N. operation under a foreign commander "is unconstitutional, and it is certainly, in my judgment, very bad policy."

The partisan tension among members of the House International Relations Committee, formerly the Foreign Affairs Committee, was clear even before Mr. Christopher began his review of the administration's foreign policy.

Rep. Lee Hamilton of Indiana, who chaired the panel when the Democrats were in the majority, complained to

his successor, Rep. Ben Gilman of New York, that the Democrats hadn't yet seen the latest version of the National Security Revitalisation Act.

Mr. Hamilton said he'd like to delay committee consideration of the bill until next week but conceded that "you and the leadership want to proceed with markup tomorrow, so I think we have to accept that."

Mr. Christopher said the legislation would "deal peacekeeping a lethal blow." He said the result would be "financial chaos" as other nations, including the NATO allies and Japan, almost certainly would follow suit.

"Under current circumstances, it would threaten to end U.N. peacekeeping overnight."

"It would leave us an unacceptable option of only the choice between acting alone or doing nothing when emergencies occur," said Christopher.

"We certainly don't want to prohibit peacekeeping," responded Mr. Gilman.

Under questioning by sympathetic Democrats, Mr. Christopher said the GOP proposal, if it had been law, would have barred U.S. participation in the defence of South Korea in the 1950s and in the Desert Shield operation mounted by President George Bush to repel the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

Turning to congressional proposals demanding that the United States unilaterally lift the arms embargo against the Bosnian government, Mr. Christopher said such action would "widen the war, increase the killing and make a bad situation worse, if that's possible."

He then challenged the members of Congress to "be honest" with the Bosnian government. "If the arms embargo is unilaterally lifted, and the Muslims get in trouble, will you send United States troops to help them?"

Meanwhile, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Madeleine Albright, defended the United Nations and noted that such Republican luminaries as former Presidents Bush and Reagan also stressed the importance of that body to U.S. interests.

In a speech in Washington to the Council on Foreign Relations, Ms. Albright said the United Nations enables the United States in many circumstances to influence events without assuming the full burden of risks.

"It lends the weight of law and world opinion to causes and principles we support," she said. "And the more able the U.N. is to end or contain conflict, the less likely it is that we will have to deploy our armed forces."

Meanwhile, a U.S. expert said Thursday with its plan to let nations drop out of a nuclear test ban treaty after 10 years, Washington is hampering its own campaign against the spread of atomic weapons.



Firefighters and divers are patrolling on a raft to rescue inhabitants that might be trapped by floods on the streets of Quimper, Brittany, western France, as a result of the heavy rainfalls of the past days. Water rose to 1.50 metre high in some places of the city (AFP photo)

18 die as rain, snowstorms lash Europe

LONDON (R) — At least 18 people died as blizzards and record rain swept northern Europe, six of them children killed when winds toppled a crane onto a French school.

Vast areas of Germany, France and the Netherlands were under water Thursday and snowstorms paralysed northern England. Weather forecasters said more rain and snow were on the way, threatening further chaos and possible crop damage.

Rainfall in western France has been the heaviest for 150 years and 12 people died there in flood-related accidents.

A police officer said the victims of the accident at the private Christian school in the centre of Toul in eastern France were all believed to be aged between 16 and 18. Two others were seriously injured.

"There was a lot of wind and the crane fell over onto the school," a shopkeeper said.

Police recovered the bodies of two men and a woman from a car swept into the harbour at the port of Concarneau Thursday. They had been reported missing at the weekend, when three others died in flood-related accidents in the region.

Several towns faced their sixth day of flooding and evacuated residents have been unable to return home.

In Paris, the Seine was 3.95 metres (13 ft) above normal, blocking riverside roads and forcing the cancellation of sightseeing boat cruises because of dangerous currents.

Four people died in fierce snowstorms sweeping northern England, apparently through heart attacks or hypothermia.

A man collapsed and died in the snow walking to his house in Leeds Wednesday night, and another after abandoning his car near the city as 14 inches (35 cm) of snow fell overnight.

Thousands of motorists were trapped on blocked roads and police and ambulances were at full stretch. "The snow has brought absolute chaos everywhere," a police spokesman said.

A 20-year-old Swedish woman was killed in an avalanche while skiing off piste in the Norwegian mountains. Rescuers dug her out and flew her to Lillehammer Hospital where she died.

Rivers burst their banks in several German towns and officials warned that even worse conditions may be on the way for many, low-lying areas. An 81-year-old man drowned in the central town of Bad Kreuznach and in Bavaria, rising water cut traffic and flooded streets.

"The situation is slowing becoming critical," said a police spokesman in Saar.

where several towns were under water.

In Germany, heavy rains and flooding hampered farm work and low-lying fields were soaked. But the winter barley crop should stand the onslaught for seven more days and rye and wheat are safe for 10 days, a local crop report said.

French grain crops, too, were reported to be safe so far.

In the low-lying Netherlands, officials said water levels on the Rhine were rising rapidly and warned that shipping would have to stop Saturday to prevent dykes from collapsing. Two villages in the district of Limburg had to be evacuated.

Rivers burst their banks in southern Belgium, flooding roads and houses, but the damage was not expected to be as severe as in the damaging December 1993 floods, officials said.

In contrast, Portuguese farmers complained cereal crops would be damaged unless there was substantial rain in the next two weeks. Clear weather also brought damaging frosts at night.

Northern Spain was hit by heavy rainstorms. But reservoirs in southern Andalusia were at a record low levels and lack of snow in the Sierra Nevada caused postponement of next week's World Skiing Championships there.

Last rebel stronghold falls to Rangoon

BANGKOK, Thailand (AP) — About 15,000 Burmese troops captured the last major stronghold of one of the world's longest running insurgencies in a major blow to the ruling junta's opposition Friday.

The Karen National Union, the military arm of the Karen ethnic insurgency, told the Associated Press it evacuated thousands of civilians from its headquarters of Manerplaw Thursday.

It said Rangoon's troops pounded the 1,000 rebels defending the base with artillery and small arms overnight and its ground forces pushed the remaining rebels out of the base at 9 a.m.

"It is a major defeat in the loss of ground, but morale is still quite high," said a Karen rebel who demanded anonymity. "We will continue to fight."

The rebel said the group had retreated to Thi They Kee, several kilometres from Manerplaw among the Burmese-Thai border. The troops are to move further away from the border, which is now Saturday with Burmese troops, and return to hit-and-run guerrilla warfare, the rebel said.

The Karen have been fighting for greater autonomy since 1948. The group, which has 4,000 troops, is the largest and most important insurgency fighting the junta.

The group is closely aligned with the self-declared opposition government and student rebels who fled Rangoon after the junta crushed a pro-democracy uprising in 1988. The Karen headquarters of Manerplaw was the centre of the opposition movement.

The rebels have refused to say how many casualties they suffered.

The offensive came three years after Rangoon declared a unilateral ceasefire to convince the dozen or so ethnic minority insurgencies to lay down their arms.

Rangoon began moving in on Manerplaw in December. It launched its final assault a week ago to bring to heel the four ethnic groups that have refused to sign ceasefires.

The Karen had offered late last year to negotiate an end to the war with Rangoon but were rebuffed.

Sources close to the rebels said Rangoon had 50 armoured personnel carriers posted just 30 kilometres

from the headquarters of Manerplaw and had pounded it for a week with artillery from three sides.

"They are trying to finish the opposition groups by using superior weapons and manpower," said Sen Aung, minister of health and education for the self-declared National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma, an opposition group. "We will continue to struggle for democracy and equality for our people."

The attack on the jungle base forced up to 10,000 refugees across the border into Thailand, Mr. Sen Aung said.

The United States urged Rangoon Thursday to end the fighting.

"The United States government calls upon the government of Burma to act in accordance with its own stated intent to resolve its difficulties with Burma's ethnic minorities peacefully," State Department spokeswoman Christine Shelly said Thursday in Washington, D.C. "We call on the Burmese government to respect the human rights of all its citizens."

2 people die in U.S. shooting

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. (AP) — A law student randomly fired a semiautomatic rifle as he walked a street near the University of North Carolina, killing two people and wounding at least two others.

Police shot the gunman in the legs. He was then tackled by a bystander who was shot in the struggle.

The wounded — the man who tackled the gunman, a police officer and another student — were taken to a hospital. None suffered life-threatening injuries, authorities said.

The shooting spree, which started around 2 p.m. Thursday, shook the 200-year-old University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, which has about 24,400 students.

"He was shooting at me, he was shooting at random, and he was shooting at anybody he saw," said attorney Boh Epting, 50. "He looked like he was on his way to his own death."

One man, a student on a bike, was gunned down in front of a sorority house. Another man was killed a half-block away on the steps of the rooming house where he lived. Police said the man near the sorority house was a student and it wasn't immediately clear if the other victim also was. Police weren't releasing the victims' names pending notification of their families.

The gunman worked his way up the street to the post office building across the street from the university. Organ County District Attorney Carl Fox said the man fired 10 to 15 rounds from a semiautomatic M-1, including several into the back of the post office building, which also contains his offices and a courtroom.

Authorities offered no motive. "What happened up there is not something that any reasonable person could understand," Police Chief Ralph Pendergraph said.

Wendell Williamson, 26, a third-year law student, was charged with two counts of murder, police said.

China rejects unfettered ICRC prison visits

BEIJING (R) — Beijing cannot allow the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) unsupervised visits with any of China's 1.285 million prisoners, a senior prison official said Friday.

China also had told the ICRC it is not obliged to allow outside scrutiny of 2,679 "counter-revolutionaries" in its 690 prisons because they are not political prisoners or war criminals as defined by the United Nations, he said.

Foreign Minister Qian Qichen raised hopes of a new openness in China's secretive prison system in late 1993 by announcing that Beijing had agreed in principle to ICRC inspections. The two sides have met three times since then.

But a leading official in charge of prison affairs in the Justice Ministry, who met Western reporters on condition his name not be used, said China could not accept the group's unbending standards for such visits.

"The ICRC has proposed to visit any political prisoner in China and conduct private

interviews using its own interpreters without personnel from the Chinese side present," the official said.

"This is hardly feasible for China," he said. He said one Chinese fear was that without chaperones the Red Cross interpreters might not understand prisoners from Tibet, Xinjiang or southern border areas where standard Chinese is not spoken.

The ICRC says it accepts nothing short of unfettered, unaccompanied visits with any prisoner in any prison at any time to ensure that interviews are candid, open and unrehearsed.

The official described Chinese prison conditions as generally good, but said 10 to 20 warders were punished each year for torturing or otherwise abusing prisoners.

A prison law which took effect in December should strengthen the protection of prisoners' rights, he said, even at the Public Security Ministry's notorious Qincheng Prison outside Beijing — the only prison not run by

the Justice Ministry. The official said he could not explain the special status of Qincheng, a prison that has housed disgraced senior leaders as well as pro-democracy activists.

The official said the ICRC turned down a July offer to visit convicted "counter-revolutionaries" at Beijing No. 2 Prison, described by former inmates, as well as diplomats and reporters who have seen it, as an unrepresentative "model" prison.

China asked ICRC to submit new proposals but had "yet to receive a response," he said.

The official said China's differences with the ICRC were a matter of principle and national sovereignty, although he was unwilling to say whether Beijing's position would change.

He said China's 2,679 jailed "counter-revolutionaries," many imprisoned for anti-government agitation during the ill-fated 1989 Tiananmen Square protests, were not political prisoners because all had committed subversive acts.

"Someone with the motive to subvert the government but who does not act on that motive cannot be convicted of counter-revolution, so the term 'political prisoner' is not accurate," the official said.

He said he could not accept that anyone could have been convicted for minor acts of protest such as playing a guitar, singing or reciting a poem as human rights activists allege.

"The truth of these cases is not so simple as just playing a guitar and then getting thrown in prison," he said, describing China's courts as "serious and prudent."

If the courts were cavalier, the numbers and percentage of jailed counter-revolutionaries would be higher, he said, noting that only 0.2 per cent of China's 1.285 million prisoners were serving time for counter-revolution.

The official nevertheless disclosed that in Tibet, where China has banned an independence movement for four decades, about 200 "counter-revolutionaries" were among more than 1,000 prisoners.

China police rescue 500 sold women

BEIJING (R) — Police in Inner Mongolia have rescued more than 500 women abducted from across China and sold to local peasants as wives, the People's Daily said Friday. Such campaigns are underway across China in the runup to next week's Lunar New Year holiday, the country's biggest, the official newspaper said. Police in Inner Mongolia broke up 33 abduction gangs in 1994, arresting 168 gang members and rescuing 487 women and their children, it reported. In a stepped-up pre-holiday campaign this month, police in the northern province said the liberated 37 more women aged 16 to 24 and assigned five officers to escort them home to Sichuan province to the south, it said. In a parallel crackdown reported in last week in Shanxi province in the north, police said they rescued more than 200 women in just three days and returned them to their hometowns. Abduction of women for sale as wives is common, especially in remote and backward areas where large numbers of men must compete for a shrinking pool of eligible women. The skewed sex ratio has resulted from the migration of rural women eager to take better jobs in China's cities as well as the traditional Chinese preference for male offspring. Since ultrasound machines arrived in China 15 years ago, growing numbers of peasants have been able to screen the sex of their foetuses and to abort those found to be female, a modern version of the traditional scourge of female infanticide.

Billionaire reclusive Getty in secret wedding

LONDON (R) — John Paul Getty II, the reclusive billionaire who has been dogged in equal measure by wealth and death, has married his companion of 20 years whom he once said had been his inspiration in life. "I got married on Dec. 29, in Barbados," the 62-year-old philanthropist said in a terse statement to the media. Getty's one-time love of heroin and rum has been usurped by a passion for cricket and old books. He has credited his long-time companion Victoria Holdsworth, once a fashion model, for the turnaround. "I owe everything, repeat everything, to Victoria. She has been my inspiration, you could say," he once said. A spokesman for Getty said: "It's true. The wedding took place in Barbados on Dec. 29 last year. Life pre-Holdsworth was tumultuous even in the best of times. Both have been married before. Getty's first marriage ended in divorce. His second wife died of a drug overdose in 1971 and he was swiftly cut out of his father's will, left with just \$500. His grandmother stepped into the breach and left Getty a fortune that is estimated at £1.6 billion (\$2.55 billion). Tragedy continued, however, when his son Paul was seized by Italian kidnappers in 1971. Getty could not afford to pay the ransom and appealed to his father. Only when Paul's ear arrived at the offices of a Rome newspaper did Getty senior pay the \$1.25 million. Paul suffered a drug-induced stroke a decade later, leaving him paralysed and nearly blind. One of Getty's daughters has contracted AIDS, said the newspaper. The hurry reclusive left the United States and moved to England in the 1970s, becoming a legendary philanthropist who recently donated \$1 million (\$1.59 million) to keep Canova's Three Graces statue in Britain.

Simpson trial draws up to 30% of Americans

LOS ANGELES (R) — The first three days of the O.J. Simpson trial proved to be a winner for the television network, with up to 30 per cent of Americans tuned in to live coverage of what has been called the murder trial of the century, a ratings analyst said Thursday. David Poltrack, a ratings analyst with CBS, said ABC and CBS drew the highest ratings, but NBC and CNN had the largest gains over their average daytime ratings. "It looks like CBS and ABC are doing about the same size audiences with O.J. that they do with their soap operas," said Mr. Poltrack. "But NBC, which doesn't have the strong soap operas, is up. The real winner is coming from CNN," he added.

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A step in the right direction

AFTER A troubled period of uneasy relations — though for no fault of Jordan's — the Kingdom and the Palestinian leadership have signed a number of agreements that are aimed at institutionalising the various aspects of relations between the two peoples. This is a positive step whose significance no one should ignore. However, it remains a first step that only through honest and committed implementation could it serve the overall causes of the two brethren peoples.

The signing of the agreements came after a long delay mainly on behalf of the Palestinian leadership. Jordan has always confessed the inseparability of Jordanian-Palestinian interests. It also believed these interests should be coordinated within an institutionalised framework that can guarantee the durability of any joint effort to promote those interests. Hence was Jordan's insistence on reaching agreements that would leave no room for ambiguity in regulating its ties with its brethren across the river.

That the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leadership has taken so long to sign agreements already reached early last year only delayed the initiation of joint work to further the interests of the sides. Now that the Jordanians and Palestinians can boost eight accords that cover most areas of cooperation between them, the two peoples can expect a steady process for the improvement of their relations — assuming that goodwill will always prevail to ensure the implementation of these accords.

It is a foregone conclusion that better Jordanian-Palestinian ties would be a trump card that would help both sides in their negotiations with Israel. Such a card the Palestinians need more in light of the troubles their talks with the Jewish state are facing. By maintaining good ties with Jordan, the Palestinian leadership can tap the unwavering support that the Kingdom has always extended to the Palestinian people. The Palestinians can always call on Jordan, a state with developed institutions and experience in state building, for all sorts of help in erecting the institutions of the self-rule Palestinian areas as well as in carrying out their negotiations with Israel.

Jordan has always stood by the Palestinian people — politically and economically — even when official ties with the PLO were at a low ebb. That it did because it saw in maintaining good relations with the Palestinians a strategic interest not only for the two sides but also for the whole Arab Nation. Strong ties with the Palestinians have been for the Kingdom a priority above the political requirements, and differences, of given eras and temporary circumstances. Such support will be more productive now that the relations between the two sides have been regulated and put in an institutionalised framework. For the benefit of the two people, these agreements should be respected, implemented and expanded upon.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

IT IS clear from the government's policy statement, delivered by Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker to Parliament Wednesday, that due attention will be given to domestic affairs in the present stage in accordance with the directives contained in His Majesty the King's letter to the government, said Al Ra'i daily. The statement clearly displayed the government's intention to pursue the process of reform, the deepening of the democratic process and opening of channels of dialogue with political parties and professional organisations and various public sectors. In fact, close cooperation with the legislative authority to achieve this goal is of paramount necessity, added the paper. The government's determination to bolster the security services and the armed forces reflects its intention of ensuring stability the country's development, said the daily. The paper called on the government to give due concern to the problems of poverty and unemployment and to exert efforts towards guaranteeing social security and introducing a comprehensive health system for the public. The paper lauded the government for its declared intention to mend fences with Arab countries and pursue efforts towards ensuring a comprehensive peace in the region.

SALEH Al Qallab, a columnist in Al Dustour, said that the agreements signed by the Jordanians and the Palestinians are of paramount importance for regulating bilateral cooperation in economic, trade, social and political fields. But, he said, what is more important is the implementation of these agreements with good intentions and in brotherly and cordial spirit. For Jordanians and Palestinians, the signing of the agreements is a source of pride as the drive towards cementing bilateral relations as demanded by the masses on the two sides of the Jordan River. There is no doubt that the recent developments in the region have made it incumbent on the two sides to embark on serious measures to ensure strong relationship and serve their national goals, he said. The agreements, signed in Amman, he said, will surely secure the attainment of this objective.

Jordanian Perspective

Jordanian-PLO accords key accomplishment for both sides

By Dr. Musa Keilani

IT TOOK Jordan and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) more than one year to ultimately finalise an agreement on broad cooperation, including economic links between the two banks of the River Jordan. The documents that were signed in Amman on Thursday signify a key accomplishment for both sides in terms of material cooperation.

By all counts, the provisions in the economic agreement largely address the basic concerns of the two sides although perhaps not to the perfect satisfaction of either: It may not be a worthy exercise to debate the technical aspects of the agreement, but it is clear that it has built-in safeguards for the interests of both sides. Take for instance the continued circulation of the Jordanian dinar in the West Bank and Gaza Strip as the currency for all dealings of the Palestine National Authority (PNA) and one of the currencies in use in the territories along with others, with the provision that neither side would undertake any measure that might undermine the currency of the other (after the issuance of a new Palestinian currency as the PNA is hoping for).

The continued use of the Jordanian curricula in schools in the West Bank and Gaza as provided for in the agreement on cooperation in education is also another cornerstone that consolidates the relations between the two banks, along with the other protocols on transport, communication, culture and information as well as administrative issues.

As far as we are concerned in Jordan, we are aware that the Palestinian signatories to the agreements do not yet enjoy the status of elected representatives of the Palestinian people, but we are willing to respect their signatures in good faith and hope that they would live up to the commitments they made in the accords. In any event, the documents have to pass through the constitutional process in Jordan by securing the approval of the Council of Ministers first and then Parliament before His Majesty King Hussein issues a royal decree endorsing them. We would have liked to see the Palestinian side going through a similar process, fully legalising the agreements, but, given the realities on the ground in the West Bank and Gaza today, we will have to be content with the present arrangements.

It is no secret that the signing of the agreements came as the result of a belated realisation on the part of the Palestinian leadership that Jordan offers perhaps the strongest safety valves at a time when pressure from all quarters is mounting on Mr. Arafat and his colleagues in the PNA cabinet. It is not simply a question of the PLO leadership needing Jordan now more than ever, but it is a reality that Jordan was always there to support the Palestinian people and that the PLO leadership has perhaps come to realise and genuinely appreciate the Kingdom's position now. Hopefully, for the sake of both sides, it is the case. As we understood so far, the Palestinian side found that

Jerusalem remained "hanging" in the air as Mr. Arafat wound up his talks here with His Majesty King Hussein. But that is not the way we read the situation.

By virtue of his signing the "memorandum of understanding and cooperation" with Jordan on Thursday, Mr. Arafat has accepted the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty "as an important step... and cornerstone towards" achieving Arab rights. Now, it would mean, for all technical purposes, a Palestinian acceptance of the provisions of the treaty, which recognises Jordan's "special" role in the Islamic shrines in Jerusalem. Obviously, in return for that acceptance, Jordan reaffirmed its continued support for the Palestinian struggle for independence and pledged all backing for the Palestinian quest to set up an independent state with Jerusalem as its capital. As such, we find little room for the arguments that we hear from some Palestinian quarters that the Jordanian-Palestinian controversy over Jerusalem had not been solved; unless of course Mr. Arafat was holding out for a major Jordanian concession in some other area that we are not privy to yet.

As far as we in Jordan are concerned, we mean it when we say that Jordan would relinquish its role in Jerusalem once the Palestinians gain sovereignty over the Holy City. For our own sake and the sake of the Islamic faith, we cannot agree to leave a vacuum in Jerusalem that would benefit no one but Israel at this point in time. That is our bottom line and we stick by that.

M. KAHIL



Agreement between Jordan, Palestinians a step towards integration

By Elia Nasrallah

AL RA'I daily described the agreement signed by the Jordanian and Palestinian leaderships as steps towards integration and unity between Jordan and Palestine, setting a unique example for other Arab states to follow. The paper expressed hope that the accords will pave the way for the two sides to work together towards ending Israel's occupation and regaining usurped Arab rights in Palestine.

A columnist in Al Dustour said that the accords give Jordan and Palestine freedom of movement independently from Israel's hegemony. Jordan's announcement that it will open a representation office in Gaza was a clear sign that the Jordanian leaderships will remain committed to helping the Palestinians in their drive to establish their rule and achieve independence for the Palestine state, said Mohammad Kawash. The writer said the Arab countries ought to follow Jordan's footsteps and offer the Palestinians all the help they need at this stage.

Ali Safadi, a columnist in Al Dustour, expressed optimism that 1995 will be the year of reconciliation among Arab states, noting that the year started with Egyptian-Jordanian and Jordanian-Palestinian summits. Both summits led to improved and stronger relations between the Arab states neighbouring Israel, said the writer. On the other fronts, Jordan and Oman held summit meetings and the Yemeni and the Qatari leaderships are preparing further meetings aimed at bolstering inter-Arab ties, he added. The Arab states are called on to use a common political language and embark on collective efforts in the face of the present stage and vis-à-vis Israel's policies, said the writer.

Apart from closing the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in the wake of the suicide bombing near Tel Aviv, Israel has accused Syria and Iran of being behind the violence, said

Ahmad Miteh, a columnist in Al Ra'i daily. The writer said that Israel has complained to the United Nations, alleging that the acts of violence are perpetrated abroad but ignoring the fact that its occupation of Arab land was the cause of the whole issue. The writer said that Israel wants to divert world public attention from the real problem of occupation and at the same time pursue its expansionist programmes and perpetuate its colonisation of the Arab lands.

Israel's decision to separate the Palestinians from the Israelis means demarcating the borders of the future Palestine state, said Tareq Masarweh, a columnist in Al Ra'i. Sooner or later, the Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin will come to the conclusion that the best and most guaranteed security for Israel lies in giving the Palestinians their full rights within their own state, said the writer. The Palesti-

sians, said the writer, can only be appeased when they regain their rights. The 19 Israelis killed in the suicide bombing were the victims of the continued occupation of Arab territories, according to a writer in Al Ra'i. Under an atmosphere of injustice and continued occupation, acts of violence are bound to spread and Israel's killing Arabs can only draw further violence, which is harmful to the cause of peace, said Mahmoud Rimawi. With more victims falling as a result of violence and counter violence, deeper feelings of hatred are bound to take root and just peace would remain illusive.

In the face of Israel's adamant position with regard to the implementation of the Oslo agreements, which call for redeployment of Israeli forces and local Palestinian elections, the Palestinian leadership ought to raise this question not only with the co-

sponsors of the peace process but at the international level as well, said Taher Adwan, a columnist in Al Dustour. The Palestinians should take a lesson from Israel's earlier negotiations with Egypt when the Israeli leaders dragged their feet and showed unwillingness to withdraw their forces from Egyptian land, said the writer. He said that the Palestinians should hold strongly to their position or risk losing a great deal.

Issa Shueibi said in a column in Al Dustour that the Israeli decision to separate the Palestinians from the Israelis would bring about immense hardships not only for the Palestinians but also for the Israelis. The closure of the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip means recognition of a Palestinian entity and this concept outweighs the hardships the Palestinians are expected to face from now on, said the writer. The Palestinians, who have offered many sacrifices for their freedom, should consider the Israeli step a blessing, albeit temporarily painful, under the present circumstances, said the writer.

Fahed Al Fanek, a writer in Al Ra'i, attacked Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres for calling on the Palestinians and the Jordanians to forge a confederation. In his book, "The New Middle East" Mr. Peres tries to present the situation in the region as one that can be dealt with through confederalism between Jordan and Palestine, with the Israelis keeping control of the land and allowing the Palestinians only to deal economically and socially with Jordan, said the writer. The writer said that Israel wants the Palestinians and the Jordanians to form a confederation in which the Palestinians will be the majority, implying that Jordan would serve as a substitute Palestinian state.

Commenting on the government policy statement presented to Parliament for a vote of confidence, Taher Adwan said that a successful government is one whose objectives are set clearly and one which carries out its promises to the people. A successful government can only win public support if its rule is conducted in participation with the people's representatives, he said. To be successful, the government must respond to demands of Parliament, which represents the people.

When is a rampage not a rampage?

Robert Fisk is infuriated by the flaws in a life of Palestine's great female leader

Hanan Ashrawi: A Passion for Peace Fourth Estate

Barbara Victor

IT IS difficult to find words to describe this book. It is so irredeemably dreadful that one can hardly do anything but list its faults: its factual inaccuracies, its bias, its hopelessly version of Middle East history. Victor claims she has written an "even-handed account" of the Palestinian uprising and the peace process, an assertion that strains credulity to its limits.

It is not just its intrinsic prejudice that makes this book so hard to take seriously, although that is as good a place as any to start. Throughout, Palestinians murder, stab and burn to death innocent Israelis while Baruch Goldstein, the Israeli settler who slaughtered 29 Palestinian civilians in Hebron last year is held up as "an extreme example" of a settler who went on a "rampage." So when is a rampage not a rampage? When is it carried out by a Palestinian, of course, in which case it is a "terrorist" act or an act of "terror," words which Victor uses 76 times in 275 pages — more than once every four pages and all but once about Palestinians. Israelis who kill Palestinians are occasionally "death squads" but usually "soldiers" and often "commandos." Israel's Phalangist militia allies who butchered hundreds of Palestinian civilians in Beirut in 1982 are respectfully referred to by Victor as "soldiers."

If the author cannot avoid double standards, however, what excuse is there for her shoddy grasp of facts? She says that the Lebanese civil war began in 1978 — when it began in 1975. She says that the Israeli army "withdrew" from Lebanon in 1982, when in fact it only began its withdrawal in 1983, kept 20,000 troops there in 1984 and still maintains a 2,000-strong occupation force in the south of the country today. She claims the Balfour declaration was made in 1921 — it was published in November, 1917 — and wrongly states that the declaration "provided for two states, Israel and Palestine, to exist side by side." It did nothing of the kind. Balfour said that Britain "supported" (not "created" as Victor claims) a Jewish "National Home in Palestine; the division of Palestine into two states was a U.N. decision, taken in 1947. Jewish "terrorism," Victor tells us — in the only reference of its kind to a Jewish group — "was never exported to foreign cities," she is apparently unaware of the murder of Lord Moyne by Jewish assassins in Cairo in 1944.

The sloppiness does not end there. Incredibly, Victor describes the Lebanese Phalange (whose right-wing origins lay in the 1936 Ber-

lin Olympics) as a "centrist party." She mixes up the Libyan capital of Tripoli with the northern Lebanese city of the same name and believes that Syria sent troops into Lebanon in 1978 (Syrian forces arrived in 1976). She thinks that Israeli troops only reached Beirut after the assassination of Bashir Gemayel in September, 1982 (they had been besieging the city for three months) and goes on to claim that the TWA jet hijacked to Beirut in 1985 by Lebanese Shias was piloted by Palestinians. She names the head of the PFLP General Command as "Ahmad Jibril" (he is Ahmad Jibril) and believes that only two (rather than three) airliners were blown up by Palestinians at Dawson's Field in 1970. How, one is left asking, did Hanan Ashrawi, the respected former spokeswoman for the PLO and now the most prominent human rights activist in the West Bank, ever get mixed up in this literary venture?

Not all the errors appear to be the result of slipshod homework. Describing the cruel and savage murders of two Israelis, Victor insists they were killed in Israel, even though she makes it perfectly clear that they lived (and were killed) on occupied Arab land — the first in Gaza, the second east of Jerusalem, neither of which are in Israel. The Palestinian people, she informs us, have "a history of violence," adding elsewhere that an older generation of conquered Palestinians felt "grateful for the chance to work in Israeli factories." What does all this mean? What does it mean when Victor describes the border between Israel and the West Bank as "imaginary" or when she reacts to an apparent attempt by an Israeli soldier to shoot Hanan Ashrawi as "something new to add to her list of credentials?"

Somewhere in all this is a book waiting to be written, a work which, just occasionally, can be glimpsed through the crust of clichés and bias. Victor does clearly understand the brutal nature of Israeli occupation and makes at least one pertinent remark on the Islamisation of Palestinian women in the occupied territories (she rightly notices that the intifada did not liberate Palestinian women). Hanan Ashrawi's views are quoted at length and her Arab critics rightly given a voice, although Victor fails to realise the extent to which Arafat betrayed Ashrawi. On one rather weird level, this book appears to be intended to

The Independent

(Continued on page 7)

Israelis storm Islamic college

(Continued from page 1)

Soldiers left behind a leaflet in Arabic, apparently to explain that the raid was to prevent "illegal" activities on campus.

College authorities said 30 male students were arrested, nine of them from their homes in Abu Dis. The dormitory houses 150 students, but the college has an enrollment of 1500.

Since Sunday's attack, Israel has rounded up several dozen Palestinians in the West Bank.

Jewish settlers, in a defiant move against a government freeze on settlement expansion, began breaking ground Thursday for a new neighbourhood in the West Bank. Two bulldozers plowed a dirt path in a barren hillside south of the settlement of Kochav Yaakov in the West Bank and settlers planted pine saplings as a mark of ownership.

They plan to build 500 housing units on the hill, just

north of Jerusalem's municipal boundaries, Israel Radio said. Israel's military government issued a work stoppage order to the settlers, army radio said.

Khader Alem, head of the Land Defence Committee in the nearby town of Ramallah said they would protest the expansion, but said it would be difficult since the army bans gatherings of more than 10 people without a permit.

"Of course, we will confront it, but we want to avoid bloody confrontation with the army," Mr. Alem said.

The work came a day after Mr. Rabin's government approved more than 3,000 new homes in three West Bank settlements surrounding Jerusalem.

But settlers were angry that the approvals excluded most of the other 140 settlements in the West Bank, where over 140,000 Jewish settlers live among a million Palestinians.

Accords could help strategy

(Continued from page 1)

Seen in this context, Palestinian officials and economists believe, the agreement came at a time to just stop the downward slide and minimise the damage as the protocols are expected to revive trade.

In comparison to the previous three draft economic agreements — that were not signed because of reluctance on the part of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat — the new accord provides more parity for the Palestinian side but also more practical guarantees to ensure the stability of the dinar.

Moreover, it aims at achieving free trade between Jordan and the Palestinian territories. According to Minister of Trade and Industry Ali Abul Ragheb, joint committees will meet soon to find practical implementations for the trade agreement.

He told the Jordan Times that the joint committee will determine the duty-free commodities that will be exchanged in a way that will enhance economic integration but protect local industries on both sides.

To some critics of Jordan's peace treaty with Israel, the agreement with the PNA could be seen as one that increases Jordan's association with Israel since the Palestinian territories are still under Israeli laws.

To some cynics, the agreement has reinforced suspicions in the Arab World that treaties with Israel are prerequisites for inter-Arab reconciliation. But, in the view of analysts who see the importance of the Jordan-Israeli peace treaty to the Kingdom, the Jordanians and Palestinians had had to meet some prerequisites of the post-cold war era and now they can afford to increase their manoeuvrability.

The importance of the treaty to inter-Arab action, according to analysts, will largely hinge on the success of the recent Arab moves, which some politicians, already describe as the

Arab awakening, to restore inter-Arab coordination.

Consequently, the role of Egypt, Syria and Saudi Arabia will be extremely crucial, especially if Cairo insisted with Arab support, on its demand that Israel sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

But on the bilateral level, the agreement also gives way to many unsolved and sensitive questions. It is no secret that the separate agreement between the Palestinians and Israel and the Jordan-Israel peace treaty have widened the Palestinian-Jordanian divide.

In political speeches and statements, politicians and officials stress the unique and special relations. But in conversation, resentment and disappointment often surface. Analysts believe these feelings need more than an agreement to address.

Among Jordanians, one finds many people who blame Mr. Arafat for dragging the Arabs into disadvantageous deals with Israel.

Many fears are not addressed in the protocols. Many analysts see the need for a serious, broad and frank national dialogue as well as dialogue with the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza.

When the Jordan Times asked a senior PNA official whether he expected people to welcome a long awaited bilateral agreement that is partly based on the two sides' agreements with Israel and whether he viewed the two accords with Israel as the terms of reference of a joint strategy with Jordan, the official replied: "the Jordanian-Palestinian agreement is not based on our agreements with Israel but these agreements cannot be ignored."

Based on interviews with officials from both sides, before and after signing the agreement, Jordan and the Palestinians see their understanding as crucial to better inter-Arab relations and achieving an Arab agenda and objectives for the current peace process.

Jordan, Israel 'stuck' on accord

(Continued from page 12)

Israel's Ben Gurion airport and leave by the other as part of joint Jordanian-Israeli tourism packages.

Mr. Kassar was also quoted as saying that he was convinced that the two countries would eventually work out an agreement and that Jordan stood to benefit from

the use of Israeli airspace at this point in time. Israel has not reached overflight agreements with Saudi Arabia, and, as such, El Al cannot use Jordanian airspace for its eastward flights.

According to Mr. Kassar, Israel still wanted the aviation agreement with Jordan to go through in order to "strengthen the relationship between the two countries," the Jerusalem Post said.

However, international aviation experts are not convinced with the Israeli argument. They say that the Israeli posture in the negotiations with Jordan could shift dramatically if Israel secured Saudi permission to use Saudi airspace for El Al's eastward flights.

"For the moment, Israel sees little advantage in any right to use Jordanian airspace because it cannot use it to go eastward and baffle El Al's flight times to the Far East," noted an expert. "But if Israel secured overflight rights in Saudi airspace, then the situation would change before you can say Jack Robinson."

When is a rampage not a rampage

(Continued from page 6)

set ber up as president of a future Palestine, a putative role for which Hanan Ashrawi may not thank Victor. The author has a tendency to romanticise her heroine and it comes as no surprise to find the dust jacket informing us that Barbara Victor ("who has covered the Middle East for most of her professional life") is the author of four novels. What advice can one give? Stick to novels, Barbara, stick to novels.

Algerian poll firm — minister

(Continued from page 12)

participation of all political forces."

The FIS was banned in March 1992, two months after the government cancelled the second round of a general election which the fundamentalist movement was poised to win.

French Prime Minister Edouard Balladur has ordered a halt to all French arms sales to Algeria, including the controversial supply of helicopters, the magazine Le Nouvel Economiste said on Thursday.

The foreign ministry refused to comment on the report but said France had held only a minor place among Algeria's suppliers. The magazine said Mr. Balladur took the decision

after the hijack of an Air France plane in Algiers on Dec. 24, in which gunmen killed four passengers before the Algerian authorities agreed to let the plane fly to France, where police commandos stormed it.

In Algiers, the moderate Socialist Forces Front of Hocine Ait Ahmed issued a call for Algerians to use every possible peaceful means to implement the "national contract" which it signed in Rome with other opposition movements and the FIS.

Its national council said the document was the basis for a "peace dynamic which could end bloodletting and re-launch democracy."

Making the national contract a reality needed the participation of all political groupings, it said.

Arafat hails Amman accords

(Continued from page 1)

accords with Israel, was in itself a Palestinian acceptance of Jordan's role in Jerusalem's holy shrines.

Israel, in the peace treaty it signed with Jordan on Oct. 26, acknowledges the Kingdom's "special" role in the Islamic shrines in Jerusalem, and the PLO's commitment to respecting the treaty also meant an acceptance of this provision, the analysts pointed out.

In return, in the same preamble, Jordan reaffirmed its support for the Palestinian-Israeli autonomy accord and also for the Palestinian quest for an independent state with Arab East Jerusalem as its capital.

Jordan has said it would retain its custody of the Jerusalem shrines only until the Palestinians gain sovereignty over the Holy City. Apparently this formula was satisfying to both sides. No Jordanian comment was immediately available.

Spokesman Abu Rodeina declined specific comment on the issue.

In his comments in Amman on Friday, Mr. Arafat expressed hope that the agreements "will promote Arab solidarity," and said Jordan and the PNA were also optimistic that the accord would pave the way for "wider cooperation in the future."

In remarks later at Gaza, Mr. Arafat described Palestinian-Jordanian relations as "special and unique and in fact (ties) of twins."

"We had successful and positive meetings, especially the agreements signed to push the wheel of ties between us forward in the interest of our Palestinian and Jordanian peoples," he was quoted as saying by Reuters.

The agreements ended a year-long tussle sparked by Mr. Arafat's refusal to ratify an economic agreement signed in January 1994 even after the accord was modified to address the Palestinian quest for symbols of independence.

Charles Ghannoum & Partners

(Al-Assad Stores)

Agents for:
Kenwood Corporation/Japan
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Welcome the visit of

HRH Crown Prince Naruhito and Princess Masako

Wishing them a happy stay in Jordan

CONGRATULATIONS

On the occasion of

INDIA'S REPUBLIC DAY
AL KARMEL

Tours and Travel Agency

offers its congratulations to
the Indian people

and

the staff of the Indian embassy in Amman.

6 policemen, 4 militants killed in Egypt

MINYA, Egypt (Agencies)

Six policemen and four militants were killed in clashes in the troubled southern province of Minya on Friday, adding to the tally of Egypt's deadliest month in three years of unrest, police said.

They said the policemen were killed in Abu Qurqus, and the militants in a separate clash in the town of Minya itself, around 250 kilometres south of Cairo.

Militants hiding in a sugarcane field opened fire at con-

scripts as they arrived in a van to relieve colleagues. Five policemen were also wounded in the ambush.

Earlier in Minya, 20 kilometres to the north, police raided a hideout and shot dead the four militants in an apartment.

Another policeman was wounded in the raid, during which four suspects were arrested and a cache of weapons and explosives found.

Sixty people — including 31 militants and 22 policemen

— have been killed so far this month, making it the deadliest since the militants launched a war to topple the government of President Hosni Mubarak in March 1991.

Eighteen people have died in the last week alone as police stepped up the fight against fundamentalists.

On Thursday security forces shot dead leading militant Ali Hassan Al Sherif at a train station in the Sobag area, 500a kilometres south of Cairo.

Police said Sherif was the military chief of the outlawed Al Gamaa Islamiyah for the Assiut region. Security forces killed another militant in Beni Suef, elsewhere in southern Egypt.

Four days earlier police killed the new head of Gamaa, Mahmoud Sayed Selim, and his bodyguard after a chase through Sohag. Selim had been hunted for years for carrying 36 attacks, officers said.

On the same day police

shot dead two other militants in Beni Suef, while the second officer in two days was killed in Minya province.

Friday's early operation took place in a medical clinic that the extremists were using as hideout, according to security officials.

Egypt's state-run Middle East News Agency later reported that one of the wounded had died. It referred to the clinic as "a den of terrorism."

The doctor who runs the clinic where the extremists hid and the owner of the building, a Muslim clergyman, both were sympathisers with the group, he said.

After the battle, police arrested 21 suspected militants in a widespread crackdown on the radical group in Minya.

Security officials say as many as 90 activists are believed to be operating in the area, some of whom fled nearby provinces after successful police attacks on their hideouts.

Saleh says Saudis massed troops

(Continued from page 1)

Saudi defence ministry told the official agency SPA that "reports by foreign press agencies about renewed tension on the border with Yemen are completely baseless."

Mr. Saleh accused unnamed parties of wanting to "impose a fait accompli."

He said talks in Riyadh between Saudi officials and a Yemeni delegation led by Parliament Speaker Sheikh Abdullah Ben Hussein Al Ahmar "have not made any progress yet."

The two countries are in

dispute over three provinces close to the border, assigned to Saudi Arabia under a treaty signed in 1934. Yemen argues it expired in September 1992 but has said it is willing to renegotiate the accord.

Mr. Saleh said "even in the case of Saudi aggression Yemen will not retaliate," adding that Yemen had not massed any forces on its border.

He voiced hopes that Syria and Egypt would continue efforts to mediate in the dispute.

Thousands line up for homes

(Continued from page 12)

"What we need now is psychological support."

"There were many small fights among us. Minor quarrels could soon blow up a huge turmoil," Mr. Soeda said.

Psychiatrists say long spells without privacy would put more stress on the newly homeless, haunted by the horrors of the earthquake and worried about their uncertain future.

"The absence of privacy in refugee camps will sharply increase stress because of the loss of homes and loved ones. They must have hope, and a specific goal," said psychiatrist Akira Yamakami of the Tokyo Medical and Dental University.

"People under extreme stress like this might resort to violence in one form or another," said Dr. Yamakami, a member of a volunteer team of psychiatric advisers in Kobe.

The more we think about our future, the more uneasy we feel. No jobs, no homes and no money," said evacuee Koreyuki Morishita, 46. "And some of us have lost family members."

The Foreign Ministry acknowledged on Friday that it may have been slow to respond to overseas offers of emergency aid following the quake, but said it had to wait for an initial assessment of the disaster.

The central government has been widely criticised for its failure to respond more quickly to offers of aid from overseas which started pouring in shortly after the Richter 7.2 earthquake ripped through central Japan.

Many people were particularly upset that it took the Japanese government 30 hours to accept Switzerland's offer to dispatch a rescue team of sniffer dogs trained to look for people under rubble.



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*Welcomes His Majesty King Hussein's
And His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan's Guests*

**His Imperial Highness
Crown Prince Naruhito
and Her Imperial Highness
Crown Princess Masako**

Wishing them an enjoyable stay in Jordan

Arab economic problems worsened — report

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Arab states continued to suffer from deficits in their budgets and balance of payments in 1993 while their industrial sector slowed down and a chronic food gap widened, an official report said Friday.

Although they managed to trim budget deficits, they achieved this through a reduction of expenditure rather than through growth in revenues or economic reforms, said the annual economic report prepared by the Abu Dhabi-based Arab Monetary Fund.

The report, a summary of which was published in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) newspaper Al Bayan, said a decline in oil earnings coupled with the huge Gulf war bill and lower remittances widened a gap in balance of payments in most member states and turned a surplus in some oil producers

into a deficit.

"Estimates show that the balance of payments in Arab countries, as reflected by their current accounts, as reflected by their current accounts, have generally deteriorated," said the report about the Arab economic and social developments in 1993.

The report, which has not been released yet, divided member states into two groups — key oil exporters Iraq, Libya, Algeria and the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states, and the remaining members of the 22-nation Arab League.

It said the current account deficit in the first group increased to 6.3 per cent of their gross domestic product (GDP) in 1993 but gave no figures.

In the second group, the current account has been "characterised by a continuous deficit which illustrates the existing weakness in their economic structures and their limited export capability and expansionary financial policies," said the report, also prepared by the Arab League economic department, the Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) and the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development.

It said remittances provided a key source of income for the second group and their decline in 1993 widened the current account deficit by 32 per cent.

"As for budgets, estimates show Arab governments managed to cut spending by nine per cent. Despite a decline in revenues by 5.7 per cent, the budget deficit dropped to 9.6 per cent of the GDP in 1993 from 11 per cent in 1992," it said.

It said the first group, which accounts for around

two thirds of the Arab GDP, had slashed the deficit by 10 per cent and the second group by 12 per cent.

It provided no figures but the previous annual report showed the combined Arab budget deficit stood at nearly \$41 billion in 1992. The deficit in the first group stood at \$34.7 billion, nearly 85 per cent of the total.

The Arab deficit hit a record \$65 billion in 1991, with GCC states Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain and the UAE accounting for \$54.5 billion.

This was due to payment of more than \$65 billion for the liberation of Kuwait from Iraqi invasion forces.

The report showed non-oil industries grew by 9.6 per cent in 1993 compared with 26.3 per cent in 1992. Growth in the overall industrial sector, which includes oil, plummeted to two per cent from

14.2 per cent mainly because of a fall in crude revenues to \$97 billion from \$101 billion.

The agricultural sector suffered even more due to weather conditions and other factors, according to the report. Cereal production declined by 1.7 per cent, including 4.1 per cent for grain and 1.9 per cent for rice.

"Such conditions aggravated the Arab food gap, which grew by 13 per cent," it said. "Arab states are still suffering from a gap in most food products, except fish. The gap in cereal and grain accounts for nearly half."

The report said most Arab nations pressed ahead with reforms to tackle their economic woes but added such programmes had been slow. Some members still have no stock markets to ensure the success of privatisations while others have yet to liberalise trade and interest rates.

U.S. House approves balanced budget amendment

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The House of Representatives overwhelmingly approved an amendment to the U.S. constitution, proposed by the Republican majority, that would compel the federal government to balance its budget by 2002.

The measure aimed at wiping out persistent federal deficits was adopted 300-132, 12 more than the two-thirds majority required, in a vote that crossed party lines. Only two of the House's 230 Republicans voted against it.

The measure would still require passage by the Senate and approval by three-fourths of the states to be implemented, but was seen as a victory for Republicans who won majorities in the House and Senate in the Nov. 8 midterm elections.

Lawmakers burst into a round of cheers as House Speaker Newt Gingrich announced early results that pushed the vote past the number of votes needed to pass the bill.

"We kept our promise," made in the Republican "Contract with America," to restore fiscal integrity to Congress, Mr. Gingrich said.

"Each and every one of our children today is endowed with \$18,000 of federal debt," said Republican leader Dick Armey of Texas. "Without the amendment, he said, 'that indebtedness will grow larger and larger.'"

Democratic minority leader Dick Gephardt of Missouri opposed the measure. He said the issue would call for "the most important votes we will cast here in Congress no matter how long we've been here or how long we will stay."

President Bill Clinton's spokesman Mike McCurry said after the vote that a balanced budget was everybody's goal. "But the president would also like to see the details of how the House would propose to meet this new constitutional requirement."

In an earlier television interview, Mr. Clinton said Americans "are entitled to know, does (the measure) mean their taxes are going up, does this mean that there's going to be cut in Medicare and social security across the board, what is the price of it?"

Unlike other bills passed by Congress, a constitutional amendment does not require Mr. Clinton's approval before it is submitted to the states.

Republicans say they have no plans to make any cuts in social security.

The amendment details call for a balanced budget starting either in 2002, or two years after ratification by three-quarters of the states. Thereafter, it requires a three-fifths vote in both houses to waive the amendment for any one year.

Merrill Lynch sees dollar recovering from temporary weakness

The following report, covering the period from Thursday, Jan. 19, 1995 until Wednesday, Jan. 25, 1995, was provided by Naser Nabulsi, private client group at Merrill Lynch-Dubai.

Overview

Fundamental View: Uncertainty about whether or not President Clinton's \$40 billion package of loan guarantees for Mexico will be able to get through Congress has been weighing on the dollar along with concerns about the upcoming FOMC meeting. Add to that the report that Japan's trade surplus with the U.S. grew to a record \$56 billion in 1994 and it is little surprise that the dollar had a rather difficult week.

We think this weakness is temporary and expect the dollar to recover once turmoil surrounding the Mexican crisis dissipates and the Fed raises interest rates again. Our Fed watchers continue to expect the Fed to tighten interest rates by 50 basis points at the Jan. 31-Feb. 1 meeting and probably again in March.

Currently, the interest rate spread between U.S. and Japanese 3-month Euro rates is around 379 basis points, up about 35 basis points from a month ago. The same spread for the U.S. and Germany is around 108 basis points, up about 45 basis points from a month ago. If the Fed tightens interest rates as we expect, those spreads could widen by another 50-to-100 basis points over the next couple of months.

Eased on this widening interest rate differential, we look for the dollar to trade near JPY/USD 105 in three- and six-months time before slower growth in the U.S. and higher interest rates in Japan push it back towards its long-term trend of depreciation. Our 12-month forecast if JPY/USD 95. Against the mark, we expect the dollar to rebound to trade in the range of DM/USD 1.60-to-1.85 for most of the year.

Technical View: The weak short term momentum and sentiment background continued to take its toll as the U.S. dollar index lost ground for the third time in four weeks. Overall, the greenback fell against four of the six major currencies that we regularly discuss. The decline of the past month has done much to damage the medium term momentum background of the index. However, short term oscillators are near oversold and are attempting to bottom. Thus, with the prospects for a rally in coming days apparently improving, the medium term pressures are likely to be relieved.

As a result, we will have to monitor the quality of any nearby rally since the next short term peak may also be a more important medium term top. The index has retraced about 80 per cent of its October-December rally, and a move towards 86.90 is possible in the context of the short term bottoming process. Important resistance remains in the 89-91.00 area.

Japanese yen

Fundamental View: The Japanese yen is currently trading JPY/USD 99.8 but we expect it to depreciate over the next few months for a number of reasons: (1) The spread between U.S. and Japanese short rates is widening; (2) Japan's trade surplus should decline; (3) the yield curve in Japan will

probably steepen; and (4) net capital outflows from the U.S. appear to be slowing down.

Recently, we revised our short- and medium-term outlook for the yen to JPY/USD in three- and six-months time while maintaining our long-term outlook JPY/USD 85. The Kobe earthquake has added to our conviction that the dollar will be strengthened in coming months.

To the U.S., growth continues to be strong and we expect real GDP for the fourth quarter to come in at a 4.5 per cent rate. In our view, this will prompt the Fed to raise rates again. Conversely, the earthquake in Japan will dampen growth in the near-term and force the Bank of Japan to keep rates low for in coming months. The spread between U.S. and Japanese short-rates is currently around 380 basis points and that could widen to 500 basis points over the next few months.

Also, the current account surplus in Japan which has been the principle force behind yen appreciation will probably decline as the rebuilding process encourages more imports. Lastly, net capital flows — the other side of the balance of payments equation — should move in the dollar's favour as returns in the U.S. market look more favourable. Pressure on the Japanese government to finance rebuilding through the issuance of bonds implies that the yield curve should steepen in Japan while bond yield in the U.S. may be near their peaks. However, current account dynamics in the longer-run still point to a trend of dollar depreciation.

Technical View: The Japanese yen fell 0.9 per cent versus the U.S. dollar during the week ended Jan. 20. The sentiment background for the currency remains oversold. Benchmark support remains at 100.80-101.80 Y/USD \$ and, with short term momentum apparently peaking, that support may be tested again over the near term.

Deutschemark

Fundamental View: The Deutschemark continues to benefit from a "flight to quality" that began with the Mexican crisis and carried over into other countries where current account or budget imbalances, political problems, or earthquakes were a cause for investor anxiety. The mark has seen significant appreciation against both the dollar and a variety of cross rates over the last month as investors looked for safe havens.

The mark is currently trading near DM/USD 1.51 compared to DM/USD 1.58 a month ago. At this level, the mark is probably overvalued and we expect the dollar to regain some ground if, as we expect, the Fed tightens interest rates at the upcoming FOMC meeting on Jan. 31-Feb. 1. A month ago, short-term rates in the U.S. offered about a 60 basis point premium to German rates. Now that premium has expanded to over 100 basis points and could expand by another 50-to-100 basis points over the next few months as the Fed raises U.S. rates.

The Bundesbank, on the other hand, is expected to wait until the third or fourth quarter before raising either the Lombard or the discount rate. Indeed, the Bundesbank may even keep the repo rate fixed until after the May French elections.

We maintain our outlook for the mark to head toward our three-, six- and 12-month forecasts of DM/USD 1.60, 1.65 and 1.60.

Technical View: The Deutschemark gained 1.4 per cent against the U.S. dollar last week, and was the strongest of the six major currencies we regularly discuss. Sentiment has been deteriorating recently and is moving back to neutral territory. The currency has now retraced most of its October-December decline and, as a result, short term momentum is near overbought readings. At the same time, medium term oscillators are only neutral, so any nearby currency weakness may only serve to carry these oscillators to better oversold levels.

In the meantime, nearby resistance exists at 1.492-1.509 DM/USD \$. At this point, 1.58 is benchmark support, although there is intervening support at 1.542-1.552. Against the yen, the D-mark rallied 0.6 per cent last week.

Despite the fact that medium term oscillators did not reach oversold territory, they seem to have turned up again. With this in mind, a rally through 66.60 may be a legitimate breakout from a multi-month trading range. In the meantime, there is important trendline support near 63.60.

Pound sterling

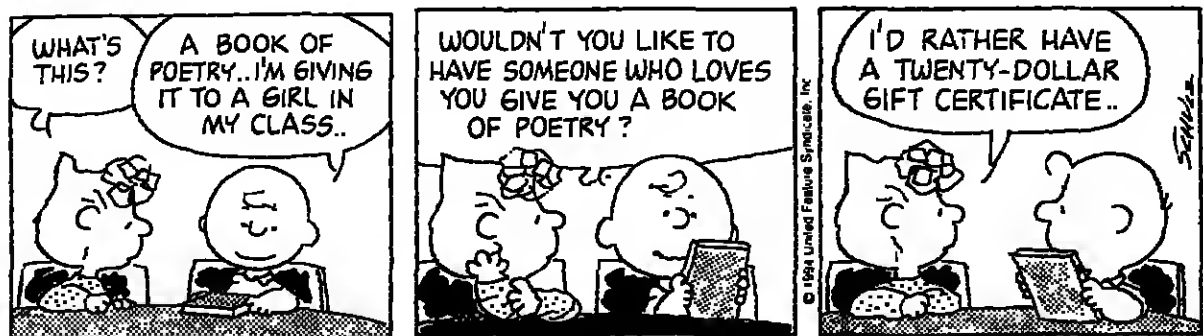
Fundamental View: The British pound rose to a two-month high against the dollar a USD/GBP 1.60. Against the mark, it rose to a two-week high at DM/GBP 2.42. The recent release of fourth-quarter real GDP that showed it to be up 0.8 per cent from the third quarter and 4.1 per cent from a year ago has renewed speculation for a near-term interest rate increase. The next monthly meeting between the Bank of England Governor Eddie George and the Chancellor of the Exchequer Kenneth Clarke is slated for Feb. 2 and some market participants look for a rate increase at this time.

However, we think another rate increase is not likely before March. The minutes from the December 7th meeting indicate that Governor George thinks that the markets are being overly pessimistic about the outlook for inflation and the amount of tightening that will be needed — are being overly pessimistic about the outlook for inflation and the amount of tightening that will be needed — Sterling futures imply a 200 basis point increase.

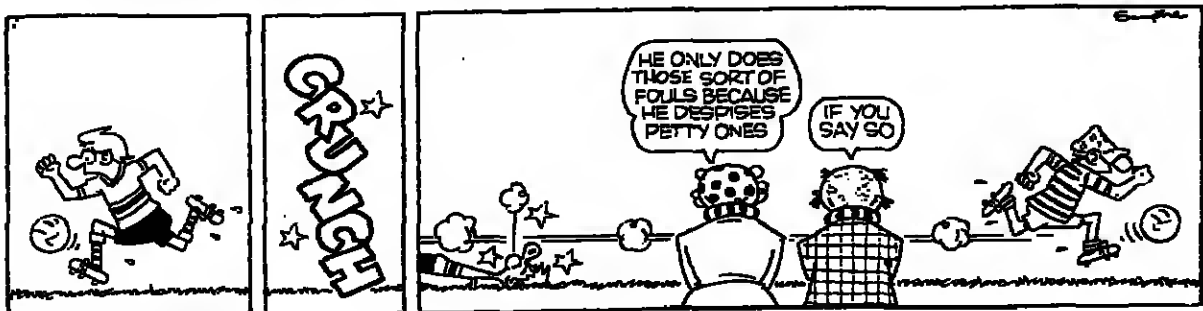
We expect rates to increase by 100 basis points in two 50 basis point increments. Still, that should be enough to push the pound toward our 12-month forecast of DM/GBP 2.60. Currently, the real interest rate spread between U.K. and German short rates is around 100 basis points and that should widen as the U.K. raises rates. However, as we expect the dollar to rebound against the mark over the next few months, the pound is likely to give back some of its gains against the dollar. We expect the pound to be trading near USD/GBP 1.56 in 12-months time.

Technical View: The British pound advanced 1.4 per cent versus the U.S. dollar during the week ended Jan. 20. Sentiment is deteriorating toward neutral readings. The currency has retraced about one half of its October-December decline, and short term momentum still has an upward bias. However, these oscillators are nearing overbought readings suggesting that the rally of recent weeks has a little more life in it. A rally through 1.59 U.S./£ could well signal a challenge of \$1.61. Nearby support is \$1.574, with second support at \$1.561. Against the DM, sterling was essentially unchanged last week.

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



THE BETTER HALF, By Glasbergen



JUMBLE THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

HEYNO
BORN
GEANET
FEYGIF

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here: _____

(Answers Monday)

Yesterday's Jumbles: ERUPT PHONY SUBMIT SPLICE
Answer: How the funny seamstress kept her customers — IN STITCHES

New board of directors elected for the Jordan Central Holding Company

AMMAN — The general assembly of shareholders in the Jordan Central Holding Company met Wednesday Jan. 25, 1995 at the Plaza hotel. The assembly elected Ms. Suhaila Khalil Maqdash as chairperson of the board of directors. Dr. Taher Kanaan,

Raja'i Al Dajani, Jad Maqdash, Azzam Al Masri, Maqdash, Mohammad Al Bilbeisi, Samir Maqdash and Youssef Sandaha (of the Union Savings and Investments Bank) were elected as members of the board.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SATURDAY, JANUARY 28, 1995

By Thomas S. Pearson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation
GENERAL TENDENCIES: Get away from career pressures for a while to regain your equilibrium by being with special friends that you can really enjoy and let your hair down. Avoid one who is jealous of you and wants to recap the past.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You can handle that problem with a partner best by doing nothing about it and it soon resolves itself.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Your tasks should go very well provided you do not let that bossy individual interfere with it. Be alert.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You find it hard to decide which pleasures to derive into during the morning, but later the right outlets present themselves.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Don't enter into any arguments between kin and an official, but show more interests in what partners are doing.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You have some good ideas for daily use, but a higher-up does not approve, so put aside for a while. Don't neglect shopping.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You find it difficult to decide which of two money interests you want to get into early, but later you make the right decision.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) A hasty associate could spoil your plans for the day, so waste little time with him or her and then carry through with your own ideas.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Confer with experts and get advice you need concerning important matters, and forget unnecessary tasks.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Forget that friend who wants to take you out for fun and get fine creative work completed.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Some public matter should be discussed with him before you handle it, but don't take action as yet.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Not a good day to get in touch with those at a distance, so concentrate on those who are near.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Use your judgment in monetary matters and don't seek advice from one in business as yet. Be happier in the evening.

Birthstone of January: Garnet — Rose Quartz

THE Daily Crossword by Wilson McNeath

ACROSS

- Football city
- Dining, for one
- Instantaneous
- Embellish
- Presidential residence
- Narrow street
- Foot T.S.
- Sizes
- Of birth
- Lamprey
- Day's march
- Location
- Comed acts
- Collection agency
- Ship dweller
- Kind of cone
- Hedon
- Honored
- Ordinary
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- Role of a play
- Charmless
- Unsubstantiated
- Season
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- Hedon
- Cashier or middle
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- Fracture from
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business daily beat A review of economic news from the Arabic press

Government to hire 5,300 new employees

★ The government will hire 5,300 new employees this year, 2,500 in newly-created positions, 1,800 in posts vacated through retirement or resignations and 1,000 unfilled posts carried forward from last year. In 1994, the government hired 6,190 employees (Al Ra'i).

★ Sources at the Amman Chamber of Industry said Japan started to grant Jordan's national exports preferential benefits under the Generalized System of Preferences. The benefits, for a period ending 2001, involves exemptions from customs duties from 10 per cent up to 100 per cent (Al Ra'i).

★ A seminar is to be held Monday at the premises of the Jordan Export Development and Commercial Centres Corporation to explain to Jordanian industrialists and businessmen about the Euro-partnership which will be held March 20, 1995 in Dortmund-Germany (Al Ra'i).

★ Jordan bought 50,000 tonnes of Argentine rice at \$170 a tonne including freight for delivery on March 5, 1995. The deal, which is the first of a 100,000-tonnes contract under the U.S. export enhancement programme, was made with the agent of the American Continental Greens Company (Al Ra'i).

★ The Ministry of Supply will severely punish any trader who violates the ministry's fixed price of 380 fils for government-imported American rice. An official urged the public to make sure they are paying the right price for the right quality because other grades of U.S. rice are selling on the free market at prices ranging between 600 fils and 900 fils a kilogramme (Al Ra'i).

★ According to informed sources at the Ministry of Health, prices of medicines are under review to reflect higher international prices and foreign exchange differentials (Al Dustour).

★ Central Bank Governor Mohammad Saeed Nabulsi said Jordan does not oppose an issuing of Palestinian currency. He explained that the Kingdom was only seeking prior coordination with the Palestinians to make the necessary arrangements to avoid unnecessary confusion (Al Dustour).

★ The Ministry of Supply specified a profit ceiling on some car spare parts at 27 per cent of the actual cost including the FOB (free on board) price plus freight, insurance, customs, sales tax, bank interest and fees as well as any other direct or indirect expenses. The cost is to be calculated by multiplying the FOB price by 25 per cent. Electronic items, lights, windshields, antennas, filters, thermostats and car clocks are among items excluded from the ceiling (Al Dustour).

★ The Al Azraq Cooperative Society, the sole producer of salt in the Kingdom under a concession from the government, wants higher prices after it was forced to add iodine to the salt. The problem has widened in the past couple of days as the society has refused to sell its salt to the bakeries unless the price was raised. The society claims that by adding iodine, its cost has increased although bakeries can obtain salt from foreign suppliers at much cheaper prices (Al Dustour).

★ The Public Transport Company intends to keep its buses on roads until 10 p.m. during the month of Ramadan (Al Ra'i).

★ A total of JD 3.3 million was spent on 359 kilometres of rural and secondary roads in the Amman region last year (Al Ra'i).

Jordan-PLO accords spur AFM activity

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Investors at the Amman Financial Market (AFM) moved in anticipation ahead of Thursday's signing of the Jordan-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and boosted prices and trading in the market, brokers said Friday.

They said the upward swing in the market was likely to continue for some time before speculators move in for profit-taking.

The weekly AFM report said turnover during last week was JD 6.8 million, up 36 per cent from the previous week's JD 5 million, and 3.5 million shares changed hands under 4,638 contracts.

The general share price index based on 60 major com-

panies closed at 144.5 points, up 1.5 points, or one per cent, over the week's opening of 143 points.

Shares in the service sector rose by an average of 3.3 points, or 2.5 per cent, as indicated by the separate sector index. The commercial bank and financial institutions index 2.2 points, or 1.4 per cent, higher, the insurance sector closed at 0.6 points or 0.4 per cent higher, and the industrial index rose by 0.2 points, or 0.2 points, the AFM report said.

The services sector also accounted for the highest sectoral turnover during the week, with a volume of JD 2.42 million, or 35.6 per cent, followed by commercial banks and financial institutions with JD 2.32 million, or 34.1 per cent, industrial stock

with JD 2.03 million, or 29.9 per cent, and the insurance sector with JD 33,000, or 0.4 per cent.

Shares of 86 companies were traded during the week. As trading closed, 51 of them showed gains, 18 showed losses and 17 remained stable, the AFM report said.

Brokers attributed the rise to expectations ahead of Thursday's signing of the "memo of understanding and cooperation" between Jordan and the PLO by Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat.

"Investors were somehow convinced reports of an impending visit by Mr. Arafat and the expected signing of the accord was not a false alarm as it had happened several times last year," said

a broker, who, like AFM dealers, cannot be identified by name under standing market guidelines.

"They moved fast acting upon the indications, and hence part of the boost in prices and trading last week," said the broker.

In general, market experts noted that many Jordanian companies stood to benefit from activities in the Palestinian territories and as such any Jordanian-Palestinian economic movement was bound to have an impact on AFM trading and prices.

"Beyond the financial considerations, there is also the psychological assurance that investors get by positive developments in the Jordanian-Palestinian political scene," said the broker.

"With the signing of the Jordanian-Palestinian accord, the way is now open for Jordanian economic interaction with businesses in the West Bank and Gaza Strip," noted the broker. "This will definitely mean increased interest in the market, translating into higher prices and turnover."

Another "strong point" in the Jordan-PLO accord is a provision that neither side would adopt "any unilateral measure" that could undermine the currency of the other. This provision is widely welcomed among Jordanian investors since it means that the Jordanian dinar would not be subject to any "shocks" in the West Bank and Gaza Strip with the abrupt issuance of a Palestinian currency.

Lebanon tries to tempt U.S. business to Beirut

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanon sends a high-powered mission to Washington Monday to tempt U.S. companies to get involved in its multi-billion-dollar reconstruction programme.

Mission leader As'ad Rizk hopes that U.S. corporations it interests in Lebanon projects will lobby Washington to lift its travel ban on the Middle East country that is struggling to recover from 15 years of civil war.

Mr. Rizk, who is industry and oil minister, will also tell U.S. businessmen that companies which invest in Lebanon will be well placed to expand in the Middle East when peace comes to the region.

On offer under the Beirut government's \$1.4 billion Horizon 2000 reconstruction plan are infrastructure pro-

jects in the next 10 years worth at least \$11.4 billion and possibly as much as \$18 billion. Mr. Rizk said in a recent interview.

Private sector projects could total another \$20 billion during the period, added Mr. Rizk, who heads the most high-powered economic mission Lebanon has sent to the United States.

The 14-man mission includes the heads of Lebanon's associations for trade, banking, construction, business and industry, the head of the government investment agency and the chairman of Sodebre, Lebanon's biggest company which is rebuilding war-devastated central Beirut.

Mr. Rizk admits the mission's strategy is double-edged: If U.S. companies want a slice of the pie they

can lobby to get the U.S. travel ban lifted.

"It's not beautiful to say it, but yes, this is the fact," Mr. Rizk told Reuters. "We are holding a carrot to the Americans..."

And step by step, with the use of these businessmen, we hope that we will remove the travel ban," he added.

Washington has barred U.S. citizens travelling to Lebanon since 1985 when a TWA airliner was hijacked to Beirut during the 1975-90 civil war. Its passengers were held in the city by Shiite Muslim gunmen after one was killed on the plane.

Four years after the war the ban still prevents Lebanon's Middle East Airlines (MEA) flying to the United States and U.S. airlines from flying to Beirut, and even

bars the sale in the United States of tickets to Beirut.

Mr. Rizk said he hoped the ticketing ban, at least, would be lifted by the U.S. State Department soon.

Beirut's ambassador to Washington, Riad Tabbara, is to hold separate talks in Washington next month on improving security conditions in Lebanon to prompt eventual lifting of the ban.

U.S. companies, unable to send executives to Beirut, have had little success in netting lucrative contracts as Lebanon's reconstruction gathers pace.

"Until today we've implemented projects for over \$2 billion taken by European firms and one Korean firm," Mr. Rizk said. "Centrepiece of the six-day mission will be a Washington

forum at which members will outline Lebanon's economic situation and prospects, and spell out public sector projects including road building, telecommunications and port reconstruction.

Private sector prospects include hotel building and tourism, oil tank farms, oil drilling, prospectation and refinery.

"This is what we are going to say... we think that in the future Lebanon will have a very important role in the area after the peace settlement," Mr. Rizk said.

"With Syria and Jordan we will have a very large market and by starting doing business in Lebanon companies will expand to the whole area better than from the occupied territory or anywhere else," he added.

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Friday.

U.S. \$1.00 costs	1.4154/64	Canadian dollar	0.7062/72
	1.5126/36	Deutschemarks	1.6962/72
	1.2736/46	Dutch guilders	31.20/24
	5.2387/37	Swiss francs	1602.8/3.8
	99.42/52	Belgian francs	99.42/52
	7.4625/25	French francs	6.6320/70
	6.6320/70	Italian lire	5.9760/10
	5.9760/10	Japanese yen	\$1.5890/00
One sterling	\$1.5890/00	Swedish crowns	13.40/10
One ounce of gold	\$379.75/80.25	Norwegian crowns	4.76/76
		Danish crowns	6.46/46

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U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close Dec 23/1/95	Tokyo Close Jan 26/1/95
Sterling Pound	1.5415	1.5427 **
Deutsche Mark	1.8172	1.8164 **
Swiss Franc	1.2785	1.2765 **
French Franc	5.2485	5.2471 **
Japanese Yen	99.53	99.54
European Currency Unit	1.2455	1.2465 **

** USD Per STD
** Europe Opening @ 8:00 a.m. GMT

Interbank Interest Rates Dates 26/1/1995

Currency	1 MONTH	3 MONTHS	6 MONTHS	12 MONTHS
U.S. Dollar	5.75	6.00	6.50	7.12
Sterling Pound	8.00	8.37	8.81	7.54
Deutsche Mark	6.66	6.81	5.66	5.50
Swiss Franc	3.50	3.75	4.00	4.37
French Franc	5.31	5.50	5.87	6.43
Japanese Yen	1.08	2.04	2.06	2.18
European Currency Unit	5.75	5.93	6.34	6.93

Interbank 364 rates for amounts denominated in U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Precious Metals Dates 26/1/1995

Metal	USD/oz	JORD/oz	Metal	USD/oz	JORD/oz
Gold	388.70	7.65	Silver	4.78	0.117

* 21 Karat

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin Dates 26/1/1995

Currency	Buy	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.697	0.699
Sterling Pound	1.1087	1.1146
Deutsche Mark	0.4590	0.4613
Swiss Franc	0.5452	0.5485
French Franc	0.1328	0.1335
Japanese Yen	0.0096	0.0093
Dutch Guilder	0.4094	0.4114
Swedish Krona	---	---
Italian Lira	0.0434	0.0434
Belgian Franc	---	---

Per 100

Other Currencies Dates 26/1/1995

Currency	Buy	Offer
Baharai Dinar	1.8390	1.8450
Lebanese Lira	0.041050	0.042310
Saudi Riyal	0.18520	0.18640
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.5150	2.5650
Qatari Riyal	0.19020	0.19150
Egyptian Pound	0.2000	0.2100
Omani Riyal	1.1010	1.1120
UAE Dirham	0.19920	0.19980
Greek Drachma	0.0410	0.0425
Yugoslav Dinar	1.3510	1.4415

Australian Open

Agassi to play Sampras in final

MELBOURNE (AP) — It was an Australian Open semifinal, but Andre Agassi treated it like another practice session.

Agassi, the colorful No. 2 seed, continued his amazing run through the opening Grand Slam tournament of the year when fellow American Aaron Krickstein retired Friday when trailing 6-4, 6-4, 3-0.

Krickstein cited a groin injury suffered early in the match as the reason for his withdrawal — but he had no chance of winning.

Agassi dominated the match with his whiplash groundstrokes and will now face defending champion and top seed Pete Sampras in Sunday's final.

Agassi, the U.S. Open champion, has won all six of his matches at the National Tennis Center in straight sets.

"It's exciting to come down here for the first time and make the final," Agassi said.

The match was played under the retractable center court roof because of a storm that subsequently flooded areas of the stadium and left the center court and media areas under ankle-deep water.

"You kind of think that when you've got a stadium with a roof you've got all the angles covered," Agassi joked of the floodwaters, which officials believed were caused by a blocked drain.

Agassi said he felt sorry for Krickstein and that had affected his own concentration.

"Aaron worked so hard to get this far he deserved to be out there," Agassi said. "I kind of sensed he wasn't at his best, so I pulled out a lot of my shots."

"I made some errors because of a lack of concentration because I was more concerned about what was happening on the other side of the net. I lost a little bit of intensity to play my own shots."

Sampras, who said Thursday that he was emotionally and physically tired, has had a far more difficult path to the final.

The defending champion, defeated fellow American Michael Chang 6-7 (6-2), 6-3, 6-4, 6-4 in three hours, seven minutes in his semifinal on Thursday.

He had been extended to five sets in his two previous matches — by Magnus Larsson and Jim Courier — and has played for more than 14 hours so far.

Agassi, by contrast, has completed his matches in just over eight hours.

Sampras advanced to his seventh Grand Slam title and will be seeking his sixth title on Sunday.



World No. 1 Pete Sampras wipes away his sweat during his semifinal match (AFP photo)

"There's going to be a lot of variables involved in the final — it certainly has all the ingredients necessary for a great match," Agassi said.

Agassi said he wasn't concerned about going into the final without a tough match under his belt.

"The dynamics of the match on Sunday will bring out the best in me regardless of what happened today," he said.

Arantxa Sanchez Vicario of Spain, who faces Mary Pierce in the women's final on Saturday, won the women's doubles championships in partnership with Jana Novotna of the Czech Republic.

The No. 2 seeds won their second straight Grand Slam by beating the top-seeded combination of Gigi Fernandez of the United States and Natasha Zvereva of Belarus 6-3, 6-7 (3-7), 6-4.

Fernandez and Zvereva had been bidding for their 10th Grand Slam title and had won the Australian title in both 1993 and 1994.

The tournament, sponsored by Ford, offers prize money of U.S.\$6.2 million and concludes Sunday.

Black out on news about Gullikson's condition

Tim Gullikson, the coach of world tennis number-one Pete Sampras, is undergoing brain and heart tests at the University of Illinois at the Chicago Medical Center.

But details of the condition of the 43-year-old former player, who had to return to the United States from the Australian Open after suffering from dizzy spells, were not revealed at the request of his family.

In a statement the only medical information the hospital would confirm was that Gullikson had suffered two mild strokes recently and that he had been diagnosed as having a congenital heart condition.

The statement also said that Gullikson had telephoned Sampras shortly after his arrival in the United States and had described the defending champion's performance at the year's opening Grand Slam tournament as "an extraordinary effort."

Sampras, who has reached the Australian Open singles final, broke down and swept during a marathon five-set quarter-final victory over Jim Courier when a fan called out: "Do it for you coach, Pete."

ing Grand Slam tournament

Sampras, who has reached the Australian Open singles final, broke down and swept during a marathon five-set quarter-final victory over Jim Courier when a fan called out: "Do it for you coach, Pete."

Neither the fourth-seeded Pierce nor top seed and world number two Sanchez Vicario has dropped a set in six matches at this tournament, though the Spaniard has yet to play a seed.

The 23-year-old winner of three Grand Slams, two of them last year, does not regard the unprecedented ease of her passage to a Grand Slam final as giving her opponent any advantage.

"It puts even more pressure on you because, even though the seeded players are not there, these (unseeded) players are playing well and make it tough," said Sanchez Vicario.

The tenacious Spaniard, whose fighting spirit has made her a favorite among the fans, was hammered 6-0, 6-2 by Graf in last year's final but much has happened in the women's game since then.

She went on to win her first Grand Slam of the year by beating Pierce 6-4, 6-4 at the French Open in early June then followed that up with victory over the formidable Graf at the U.S. Open.

But her second title was against a Graf who, seriously affected by a back injury, let slip a 6-1 3-2 lead to lose in three sets.

Graf's subsequent struggle to regain fitness has given the resilient Sanchez Vicario, so long in the shadow of Graf and the absent Monica Seles, the opportunity to grab the top ranking for the first time.

To hear her speak over the past week, however, Saturday's match, her seventh Grand Slam final, is just another game and she will not be thinking about the dream of ending Graf's 19-year reign as number one.

"It would be great if I do it but it's not on my mind. I will just try to go and play my best and see what happens," she said after beating 47th-ranked American Marianne Wendel Witmeyer in a one-sided semifinal.

She has also rejected any psychological advantage from her defeat of the Canadian-born Pierce in Paris after her opponent had made French Open history by becoming the first player to drop only 10 games on her way to the final.

Pierce, whose loss in Paris marked her first Grand Slam final appearance, is playing as aggressively and arguably more consistently than seven months ago.

She has only dropped 25 games on the way to the final and her semifinal opponent, world number three Conchita Martinez, who was blitzed 6-3 6-1, compared the power of her groundstrokes to Graf's.

Pierce, the world number five, has gained in confidence after freeing herself from the dominance of her father, Jim, who was banned indefinitely from all her tournaments in 1993 because of his disruptive behavior.

Under Nick Bollettieri, one-time mentor of Andre Agassi and now also coach of Boris Becker, Pierce has been more focused and appears to have brought her unpredictable temperament under control.

Bollettieri, who took over coaching duties at the beginning of last year, returned to the United States earlier this week but has been advising her by telephone.

"He's helped me quite a bit tactically and mentally. We work on everything in my game," Pierce told reporters after trouncing eighth-seeded Natasha Zvereva 6-1 6-4 in the quarter-finals.

Pierce, who is bidding to become the first Frenchwoman since 1967 to win a Grand Slam, believes she can improve on her form. "I'm happy with the way I am playing but I think I can play better," she said after beating Martinez.



Mary Pierce

Sanchez Vicario eyes top ranking at last

MELBOURNE (R) — Spail's Arantxa Sanchez Vicario, so long the courtier to the queen of the courts, Steffi Graf, can at last wrest the number one crown from the injured German if she wins Saturday's Australian Open title.

But standing in her way is a new pretender to the throne is France's Mary Pierce, only 20 and in irresistible form in her progress to the year's first Grand Slam final.

Neither the fourth-seeded Pierce nor top seed and world number two Sanchez Vicario has dropped a set in six matches at this tournament, though the Spaniard has yet to play a seed.

The 23-year-old winner of three Grand Slams, two of them last year, does not regard the unprecedented ease of her passage to a Grand Slam final as giving her opponent any advantage.

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European Basketball Roundup

ATHENS (R) — Olympiakos of Greece beat Badalona of Spain 84-53 (halftime 50-31) in the European Men's Basketball Championship. Olympiakos — Eddie Johnson 18, Dragan Tarlac 18, Alexander Volkov 12. For Badalona — Juan Morales 21, Jordi Villacampa 10, Alfonso Garcia 6.

Real Madrid beat Maccabi Tel Aviv 76-64 in a fluctuating Group A match which saw the Israelis leading 42-32 at halftime.

Arvidas Sabonis scored Madrid's first 11 points but Maccabi stretched clear to 32-19 after just 12 minutes.

The Spanish side staged an impressive second half rally as Maccabi's Guy Goodes, a major influence in the first 20 minutes, tired badly.

Sabonis top-scored with 23 points as Real Madrid kept their unbeaten home record this season.

In France, ex-European champion Limoges kept their hopes of qualifying for the final phase alive when they scored a crucial 69-57 win over Barcelona.

Also unbeaten at home in

Europe this season, Limoges recovered from a disastrous start — they trailed by 10 points after 12 minutes — to wrap up the match in the second half.

American Michael Young was by far the best player in the match, scoring 17 points for the French.

In the first half, play had been dominated by Barcelona, but Limoges made numerous changes and finally found the right formula shortly before the break, closing the gap to three points at halftime on 34-37.

American Tim Kempton then spurred his teammates into action and two three-point throws from captain Richard Dacoury after 25 minutes put Limoges in the driving seat.

"We owe must try everything against Efes Pilsen. We had a lot of ups and downs this season but we can still aim at finishing second in group B," said playmaker Frederic Forte.

Limoges visit pace-setting Efes in an important match next Thursday.

Group A

	P	W	L	Pts.
Pesaro (Italy)	10	8	2	18
Panathinaikos (Greece)	10	7	3	17
Real Madrid (Spain)	10	7	3	17
CSKA Moscow (Russia)	10	5	5	15
Maccabi Tel Aviv (Israel)	10	5	5	15
Olimpija Ljubljana (Slovenia)	10	3	7	13
Paok Salonika (Greece)	10	3	7	13
Benfica (Portugal)	10	2	8	12

Group B

	P	W	L	Pts.
Efes Pilsen (Turkey)	10	7	3	17
Olympiakos (Greece)	10	7	3	17
Barcelona (Spain)	10	6	4	16
Limoges (France)	10	6	4	16
Bologna (Italy)	10	6	4	16
Bayer Leverkusen (Germany)	10	4	6	14
Cibona Zagreb (Croatia)	10	4	6	14
Juventut Badalona (Spain)	10	0	10	10

Warriors win in overtime; Suns down Pacers

LANDOVER, Maryland (AP) — The Golden State Warriors ended their 14-game road-losing streak Thursday night, getting seven points in overtime from rookie Dwayne Morton in a 121-118 victory over the Washington Bullets.

The Warriors trailed by 18 points midway through the third quarter before rallying. Tim Hardaway scored 30 points, going 11-for-11 at the free throw line. Morton had a career-high 14 points, as did Tom Gugliotta 14 in his first game at USAIR Arena since being traded from the Bullets on Nov. 17.

Calbert Cheany led Washington with a career-high 32 points on 14-of-18 shooting. Scott Skiles had 25 points and Juwan Howard 24.

Suns 92, Pacers 86: In Indianapolis, Charles Barkley had a season-high 19 rebounds, including a crucial

Anthony Mason pulled down 13 rebounds for the Knicks, who had their 100th consecutive sellout at Madison Square Garden. Lamond Murray scored 14 points to pace the Clippers.

Trail Blazers 106, Pistons 89: In Auburn Hills, Michigan, Clyde Drexler, the subject of persistent trade rumors, scored 13 points and sat out the final 16 minutes as Portland beat Detroit.

Rob Strickland had 15 points and seven assists and Clifford Robinson had 14 points for Portland, which used an 18-2 run late in the third quarter to pull away.

The victory was Portland's third in four games, while Detroit's loss was its 21st in its last 26 games.

Magic 102, Bulls 99: In Orlando, Florida, Shaquille O'Neal had 37 points and 17 rebounds to lead Orlando

NBA ROUNDUP

one following a missed free throw in the final seconds as Phoenix matched the club record of eight straight road wins.

The Pacers, who lost leading rebounder Dale Davis with a dislocated right shoulder early in the second quarter, trailed 80-65 with 9:23 left in the game. Rik Smits, who led all scorers with 26 points and had a team-high 12 rebounds, and Bryon Scott sparked a 17-4 run, but Indiana then blew four consecutive chances to tie the game.

Elliott Perry and A.C. Green led the Suns with 14 points apiece.

Cavaliers 77, Hawks 68: In Atlanta, Cleveland matched its lowest scoring output of the season but held the Hawks to their lowest score since moving to Atlanta in 1968.

Chris Mills and Tyrone Hill leading the Cavaliers with 14 points apiece and Bobby Phillips had 13. Mookie Blaylock led the Hawks with 22 points, including Atlanta's final nine points over the last 5:36.

The Cavs won their third in a row and held the Hawks scoreless for the last 3:25 and didn't trail in the final 45:17.

Knicks 87, Clippers 74: In New York, Patrick Ewing had 21 points and 10 rebounds as New York Knicks won its sixth straight game and its 14th in the last 15.

The Clippers were held to just 29 first-half points as they lost their third straight on a six-game road trip that began Monday.

over Chicago, which played without suspended star Scottie Pippen.

The Magic, who improved their NBA-best record to 34-8 and kept a spotless 20-0 home mark, trailed most of the game but took the lead for good on a flying tap-in by Donald Royal with 1:02 left. O'Neal was then fouled on a jump hook with 37 seconds left and converted the three-point play to put the game out of reach.

Dennis Scott scored 19 points and Nick Anderson added 15 for the Magic. Corie Blount, who started in place of Pippen, led Chicago with 16 points.

Spurs 103, Rockets 100: In San Antonio, the San Antonio Spurs relied almost exclusively on their starting five Thursday night, getting 101 points from them in beating Houston to move a half-game ahead of the Rockets in the Midwest Division.

Sean Elliott had 26 points and David Robinson 25 for San Antonio, which still trails Utah in the division. Dennis Rodman, debuting his fifth hair color of the season (purple), grabbed 22 rebounds and added 11 points.

Hakeem Olajuwon scored 36 for Houston and Robert Horry added 20.

Jazz 120, SuperSonics 108: In Tacoma, Washington, Utah won its 15th straight road game — one short of the NBA record — and 14th in a row overall, outscoring Seattle by 12 points in the fourth quarter.



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ACCOUNTING	BILLING	CREDIT/COLLECTIONS
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5 Accountants	3 Billing Professionals	3 Credit Analysts

All work in the Finance organization will be automated and all applicants must be university graduates and PC literate versed in Microsoft Excel and Word.

II. The Sales and Marketing organization is seeking to fill the following positions:

SALES TEAM	CUSTOMER SERVICE REPS.
10 Sales Representatives	10 Customer Service Representatives

All applicants in the Sales and Marketing organization must be university graduates, have 2 years experience and be PC literate.

III. EXECUTIVE SECRETARIES

6 Secretaries to support the Finance and Sales/Marketing teams. The ideal candidates must be completely fluent in Arabic and English (read, write and speak), be proficient in MS Excel & Word in both languages and at a minimum have 3 years of experience. Experience using graphics would be considered a plus.

Manchester United ban Eric Cantona for the rest of the season

MANCHESTER (AP) — Manchester United on Friday suspended French striker Eric Cantona until the end of the season for attacking a fan at Wednesday's game at Crystal Palace.

The 28-year-old striker jumped into the crowd and aimed a two-footed kung-fu-style kick at a 20-year-old Palace fan who had been taunting him after the Frenchman had been sent off.

Cantona then punched the fan before being restrained by officials.

Manchester United director Maurice Watkins announced the ban at a news conference Friday, a day after the English Football Association charged Cantona with bringing the game into disrepute.

Watkins also said United had fined Cantona "the maximum sum permissible," under his contract, although the club did not say what that figure was.

"What happened was a stain on our game," FA Chief Executive Graham Kelly said Thursday. "The Football Association believes the incident was unprecedented in our game. It brought shame on those involved and worst of all on the game itself."

Cantona, the French national team captain and English club player of the year last season, has 14 days to answer the FA's charge. His fate then will be decided at a hearing before an FA disciplinary committee, which also will take into account the action already taken by United.

Meanwhile, the police continue their investigation into allegations of assault against Cantona. No charges have yet been made.

In scenes the FA said were unprecedented in English soccer, the fan, 20-year-old Matthew Simmons, and Cantona exchanged punches before the player's teammates intervened. As the Frenchman was led away, another fracas erupted between United midfielder Paul Ince and an unidentified 48-year-old spectator.

Scotland Yard said the two fans gave statements at a local police station alleging assault. Both suffered minor bruises.

World governing body FIFA also condemned Cantona's behaviour, but said that for now it would leave the matter in the hands of the FA.

It was the latest in a long line of Cantona tirades in France and England. Wednesday's red card was his fifth



Manchester United star Eric Cantona fights with a spectator during Manchester United's 1-1 draw at Crystal Palace (AFP photo).

since joining Manchester United in 1992. He missed United's first four European Champions Cup games through suspension and served a three-match ban earlier this season for foul play in a pre-season exhibition game.

The presidents of the French Football Federation and the National Soccer League have requested English soccer authorities to relay all information and evidence so they can take appropriate action. Federation president Claude Simonet indicated Cantona would be ousted as captain of the French national team.

"I am stupefied by such behaviour, which is contrary to all sporting ethics," Simonet said. "The French Football Federation will likely take draconian measures at the appropriate moment."

49ers poised for record fifth Super Bowl victory

MIAMI (R) — It is a team of superstars against a team of no names, a team of destiny against a Cinderella team.

In Sunday's all-California Super Bowl, the San Francisco 49ers aim to become the first five-time winners of the NFL's big show, while the San Diego Chargers try to pull off the kind of upset sports legends are made of.

The 49ers were the undisputed team of the '80s with a 4-0 Super Bowl record. And after disposing of the self-proclaimed team of the '90s with a 38-28 victory over the two-time defending champion Dallas Cowboys, they are poised to add a new chapter to their glorious Super Bowl history.

The only remaining obstacles to fulfilling that destiny is a team they already crushed 38-15 during the regular season.

The 15-3 49ers, favoured by an unprecedented 20 points, boast the league's most explosive offence and the finest defence money can buy — a combination that seems set to extend the 10-year trend of NFC Super Bowl domination.

While it may be a refreshing change to see a new team in the Super Bowl — or for that matter any team other than the Buffalo Bills, losers of the last four — the 15-3 Chargers appear to be another in a long line of overmatched AFC clubs, long on heart and desire, but short on weapons.

Weapons are something the Niners have in abundance, including nine prop bowl players.

The offence features the league's best quarterback in Steve Young and a devastating veteran corps of receivers, led by record-breaking future hall of famer Jerry



Junior Sean of the San Diego Chargers stretches out during team practice on Thursday at the Dolphin Training Facility in Davie, Florida, three days prior to Super Bowl XXIX which will oppose the Chargers to the San Francisco 49ers (AFP photo).

Rice and complemented by tough-as-nails John Taylor, who caught the game-winning touchdown pass in Super Bowl XXIII.

They also field an improved running game, thanks to rookie fullback William Floyd who is an effective blocker for Ricky Waters and a solid short-yardage threat. And Young is almost as dangerous scrambling with the ball as he is throwing it.

Young has said nothing short of winning the championship would be acceptable to these 49ers. "Anything less would be a train wreck." And to that end, the 49ers formerly suspect defence has been completely rebuilt with the express purpose of bringing home a fifth Super Bowl title.

Three-fourths of the San Francisco defensive backfield are pro-bowl selections, beginning with the supremely talented Deion Sanders, the

fastest man in the NFL and a player single-handedly capable of taking away half the field from opposing quarterbacks.

Other significant additions to the revamped 49ers defence are fiery linebacker Ken Norton Jr. going for his record third straight title after starting for Dallas the past two years, and tested veterans Gary Plummer and Ricky Jackson, each looking for a first championship ring.

And sensational rookie defensive lineman Bryant Young has been wreaking havoc up front for the Niners all season.

The Chargers fancy themselves a "smash mouth" team built in the NFC East mould — not a bad concept considering that division has produced six of the last eight Super Bowl champions.

Their game is based on ball control with burly young rushing talent narrows means steamrolling his way behind a huge front line.

San Diego knows it must keep Steve Young and company off the field in order to have a chance and that means controlling the line of scrimmage and eating up huge chunks of the clock with their running game.

Their offence is run by quarterback Stan Humphries, a pizza-loving throw-back to the days before the fitness craze, who has a way of coming up with big plays when his team needs it most.

These Chargers have demonstrated a propensity for producing stirring come-from-behind victories.

Few gave them a chance of stopping the Miami Dolphins' high-scoring offence and even fewer thought they could contend with the Pittsburgh Steelers' stifling defence.

Al Wihdat clinch 4th Jordan Soccer League trophy

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Al Wihdat Friday won their 4th Jordan Soccer League crown after their final-minute 1-0 victory over Al Arabi who were relegated to the second division.

The match, attended by a record 22,000 fans at Amman Stadium, saw at least half a dozen chances squandered by Al Wihdat's players before Jamal Mahmoud netted the winning goal seconds before the final whistle.

A draw would have also secured the title for Al Wihdat who finished first two points ahead of second-placed Al Ramtha who came in second after a 2-0 win over Shabab Al Hussein.

Titleholders Al Faisali finished third after their 1-0 win over Al Hussein at Al Hassan Stadium in Irbid.

Four teams dropped to the second division: Al Arabi, Shabab Al Hussein, Al Karmel and Al Jeel.



Al Wihdat's team

Al Qadissieh moved away from the relegation zone after a 5-1 win over Al Jeel.

Kufroum, the only new-comer this season to maintain a place in the first division also secured their

standing after a 2-0 win over Al Karmel.

Al Jazireh, who were near relegation last season maintained fifth place throughout most of the competition and scored a

2-1 win over Al Ahli in their final match.

Al Ahli, Qadissieh and Kufroum tied in overall points and finished sixth, seventh and eighth on goal difference.

FINAL STANDINGS

	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts.
Wihdat	22	14	8	—	28	5	36
Ramtha	22	14	6	2	44	13	34
Faisali	22	12	7	3	42	9	33
Hussein	22	14	2	6	52	25	30
Jazireh	22	11	5	6	32	23	27
Qadissieh	22	8	6	8	31	26	22
Ahli	22	8	6	8	30	30	22

☆ Dropped to second division.

Oates lifts Bruins to win over New Jersey

BOSTON (AP) — Adam Oates lifted the puck over Chris Terreri's left shoulder with 1:17 left in overtime Thursday night to preserve Blaine Lacher's perfect record and give the Boston Bruins a 1-0 victory over the New Jersey Devils.

Oates worked a give-and-go with Ray Bourque at the blue line before putting the shot on net. Cam Neely retrieved it from behind the goal and dropped it into the slot for Oates, who gave Boston its third straight victory. In Philadelphia, Garry

Galley and Mark Recchi scored twice, sparking Florida's four-goal first period and leading the Panthers to their first victory of the season. Florida goalie John Vanbiesbrouck broke out of a two-game slump in which he allowed nine goals, making 33 saves against Tampa Bay.

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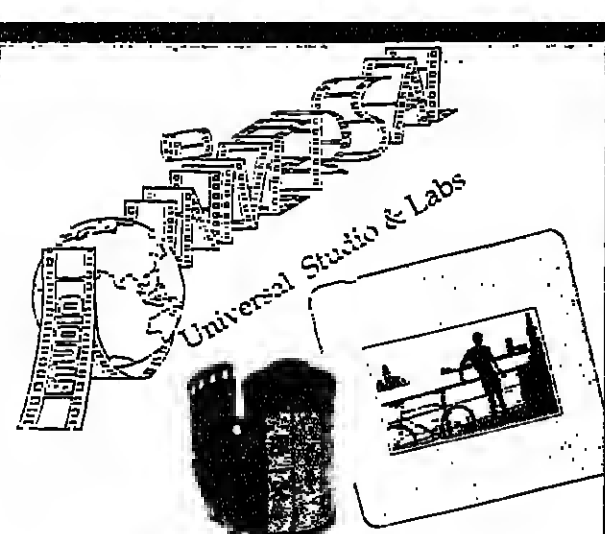
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PARLAY YOUR CHANCES

Both vulnerable: South deals.		South	West	North	East
NORTH		1 ♠	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
SOUTH		3 ♠	Pass	3 ♠	Pass
WEST		2 NT	Pass	4 ♠	Pass
EAST		4 ♠	Pass	2 ♠	Pass
WEST		♠ Q 7 6 2			
		♠ A K 3			
		♠ K 3 2			
		♠ 6 3 2			
EAST		♠ K J 9 8 3			
		♠ 8 5 2			
		♠ 6 5 2			
		♠ J 4			
SOUTH		♠ A			
		♠ 7 6 4			
		♠ A Q J 10 8			
		♠ A K Q 5			

The bidding:

Opening lead: Queen of ♠
Before playing to the first trick, map your campaign carefully. The secret is to deploy all your forces to gain maximum effectiveness.

The key to the slam was North's bid of four diamonds. When a player makes a game contract to a minor suit partial, it is not a sign of weakness, rather, it shows slam interest. South cooperated by cue-bidding

the ace of spades and North wasted no time in contracting for 12 tricks. West led the top of the heart sequence and declarer's problem was obvious. A heart loser could not be avoided, so the fate of the contract hinged on not surrendering a club trick as well.

If clubs split 3-3, there was no problem. But the more likely club division was 4-2. Even that holding would not be fatal if either defender had length in both minors, or if East was the defender with three trumps and short clubs.

Declarer won the first trick in dummy, came to hand with the

queen of clubs, crossed back to the table by overtaking the three of trumps with the eight and led another club. When both defenders followed, declarer re-entered dummy with the king of diamonds and led another club.

East was powerless to prevent declarer from bringing home the contract. If the defender ruffed with the last outstanding trump, declarer would follow low, later discard a heart on the ace of clubs and trump the losing heart. If East did not ruff, the ace would win and declarer would ruff the last club with dummy's high trump.

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PHILADELPHIA		PLAZA		CONCORD		AMMOUN THEATRE		Nabil Al Mashini Theatre		AHLAN THEATRE	
Jim Carrey in THE MASK Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30		Najlaa Fathi & Farouq Al Fishawi — in THE GARAGE Arabic Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 The movie: The Lion King will be shown at 5 p.m. every evening as well as extra shows on Fridays and Thursdays at 10:30		CONCORD "1" Sylvester Stallone - Sharon Stone in THE SPECIALIST Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6, 8:15, 10:30 CONCORD "2" Harrison Ford - Whitney Houston — THE BODYGUARD Shows: 3, 5		SUM'A in the satirical play HI CITIZEN Composed and directed by Mohammad Al Shawafieh Daily from 8 p.m. Children's Play The Ninja Turtles Show Directed by Akram Abul Ragheb Daily at 10:30 p.m.		Presents Abu Awwad In the social comedy Punctured Bag The theatre is closed on Mondays Tickets are available all day		Presents: The political satire: AL SALAM YA SALAM at 8:30 p.m. For reservation, please call 625155 The theatre is closed on Saturdays & Sundays	

Jordan, Israel, 'stuck' on preferential trade accord

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan and Israel are "stuck" on a list of commodities to be given preferential treatment in a trade agreement being negotiated in view of the high customs duties and taxes on imports to Israel, a senior official said Friday.

The official said Jordan was also "taking it slowly" while negotiating the trade accord. "The Israelis would like to conclude an agreement as quickly as possible, but we have to take a lot of factors into consideration before we actually enter an accord," said the official, who preferred anonymity.

"We don't want to rush into something as serious as a trade agreement with anyone," added the official. That being the principle, however, the official said he expected a meeting on Wednesday to make progress on the issue.

The two sides met last Wednesday but they could not reach agreement on the list of commodities.

Under the Oct. 26 peace treaty, Jordan and Israel are bound to finalise an accord on trade by May 10.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, during a Jan. 12 visit to Amman, set Jan. 25 as the deadline for reaching an accord as part of an effort to accelerate the implementa-

tion of the treaty, but the deadline was missed as a result of the differing approaches.

"We don't see it as a deadlock, but a matter to be settled in further negotiations," said the Jordanian official, who declined to go into details of the differences. "We hope the issue could be settled this week" when the two sides meet at Deir Alla on the Jordanian side of the Jordan Valley.

But it appeared that the main difference was over Israel's insistence that the lowering of tariffs be "symmetrical" — meaning that the cuts be uniform on both sides in terms of percentages.

This would effectively mean Israeli duties and taxes on Jordanian products remaining higher than the Jordanian tariffs on Israeli products.

"Basically, we believe that Israel, in view of its high customs duties and other taxes related to imported products, should give Jordan a better deal," said the official. He noted that "the base customs duties and taxation starts from 24 per cent in Jordan while the base for Israel is over 30 per cent."

"We don't see why Israel cannot offer us preferential treatment at par with the treatment it is offering to imports from the U.S. and European countries," the

official told the Jordan Times.

According to reports in the Israeli press, the two sides have reached an agreement in principle that more Jordanian goods would benefit from preferential treatment as well as from overall lower duties and the differences are over the actual items to be included in the list for preferential treatment.

Aviation talks stalled

Israeli Transport Minister Yisrael Kessar said Wednesday that he did not expect Jordan and his country to finalise an agreement in civil aviation soon.

According to Mr. Kessar, who was quoted by the Jerusalem Post in its Thursday issue, the stalemate was over the route that Jordanian aircraft are to take while flying through Israeli airspace. Jordan is seeking a higher altitude than the 11,000 feet that Israel is offering.

Israel is arguing that commercial flights to Jordan flying at a height above 11,000 feet would interfere with Israeli military training flights.

"We have offered them the best possible terms without hurting the air force," Mr. Kessar was quoted as saying by the Jerusalem Post.

But flying as low as 11,000 feet would effectively eliminate the fuel advantage that

Royal Jordanian (RJ) planes would have when they cut short the flying time by using Israeli airspace to enter the Mediterranean skies on their West-bound flights.

A senior Jordanian official familiar with the negotiations said the Kingdom was insisting on the "universal principle of free ascent and descent" which is an essential component in international air transport agreements.

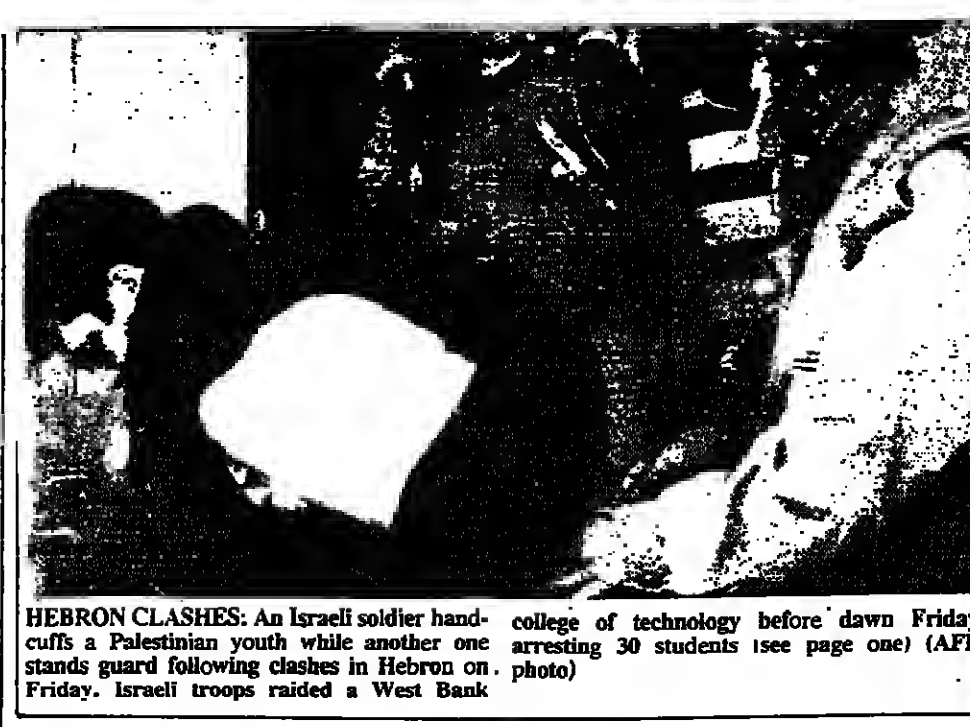
"What is the use of an agreement if we cannot agree on the basic principles," asked the official. "If Jordanian aircraft were to use Israeli airspace under the conditions that Israel wants, then there is little, if any at all, advantage for us."

Furthermore, "flying under 11,000 feet in winter is not at all a pleasant experience for passengers since that belt of altitude in this part of the world would have a lot of turbulence," said the official.

On the Israeli argument involving military training flights, the official said, "In a situation of peace, why can't they shift the area of training flights?"

The statement, according to Mr. Kessar, also means that there would be no agreement between RJ and Israel's El Al airlines. An RJ-El Al accord will make it possible for tourists to fly to Queen Alia International Airport or

(Continued on page 7)



HEBRON CLASHES: An Israeli soldier handcuffs a Palestinian youth while another one arrests 30 students (see page one) (AFP photo) Friday, Israeli troops raided a West Bank

Dual Jordanian-Palestinian 'nationality' no longer an issue

By Lamis K. Andoni
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordan and the Palestine National Authority (PNA) decided that there was no need to discuss giving Palestinian holders of Jordanian two-year passports dual citizenship since both their Jordanian passports and to be-issued Palestinian passports are no more than travel documents.

Consequently the issuance of Palestinian passports that the PNA plans as part of enhancing symbols of Palestinian sovereignty, should not warrant changing the status of Palestinian holders of the Jordanian two-year passports.

"The Palestinian passports that are to be issued are no more than travel documents," a Jordanian official told the Jordan Times. "The Jordanian two-year passports are also travel documents and do not mean citizenship. Consequently there should

be no problem of dual citizenship."

The PNA had asked Jordan to allow dual citizenships to enable Palestinian holders of two-year passports to have both Palestinian and Jordanian passports.

Jordan responded that it could not allow dual citizenships since that contravened the Arab League rules and regulations. But the two sides then decided that the situation did not warrant raising the issue of a dual citizenship.

"The status of Palestinian holders of Jordanian two-year passports will remain intact," the official said. "But Jordanians of Palestinian origin who hold five-year passports who are citizens are not expected to acquire Palestinian passports," the official explained.

A senior PNA official said the Palestinians had decided that there was no need to raise the issue of dual

citizenship and not to make any changes on the current situation.

It was not clear yet how the two travel documents will be used. Palestinians have requested Jordan not to withdraw the two-year passports from West Bankers and Gazans to enable them to travel to places where Palestinian passports will not be accepted.

PNA officials insist that the U.S., Israel and other donor countries have accepted to recognise the Palestinian passports as travel documents.

Jordan and PNA have also agreed to extend crossing hours on the King Hussein Bridge to 16 hours as a prelude to keep the bridge open for 24 hours, the official.

He said that it was agreed that bridges should be reconstructed to enable vehicles to cross from Jordan to the autonomous areas and back to facilitate trade.

Clinton takes on critics who call him wishy-washy

WASHINGTON (R) — U.S. President Bill Clinton rejected criticism that he lacks strong convictions, saying he has taken on tough fights on trade, gun control and other controversial issues and gotten "a lot of grief" for it.

"If you look at all the strong opponents I've got, I wouldn't have them if I didn't have strong convictions," he said in an "NBC Nightly News With Tom Brokaw" interview. The interview was videotaped in the Oval Office two days after the Democratic president, in an 81-minute address to Congress and the country, tried to regain momentum after the Republican takeover of the legislative branch of government.

Mr. Clinton, who has drawn harsh words from both friends and foes for being too long-winded, conceded that the speech was "a little longer than I wanted it to be."

"Self-discipline is the requisite of leadership — and it is — then President Clinton's State of the Union address dramatised his failure. It was a speech about everything, and therefore about nothing. It was a huge missed opportunity, and one he will regret," David Broder, a widely respected political columnist for the Washington Post, wrote Thursday.

Clinton said his speech ran long because of a lack of control of his part as Mr. Broder and other critics claim. Rather, he said he did not expect opposition lawmakers to "respond as positively as they did to some of the things I said."

As for the off-heard criticism that he has failed to lead effectively because he is too wishy-washy, Mr. Clinton said: "If you look at all the strong opponents I've got, I wouldn't have them if I didn't have strong convictions."

"First of all, who reversed 12 years of flagrant deficit spending? We did by one vote (with the most brutal fighting that anybody can remember. We did that... and took a lot of grief for it," he said.

Panel endorses wider testing of AIDS vaccine

BETHESDA, Maryland (AP) — A scientific advisory panel urged the U.S. government to head AIDS victims' pleas for wider testing of the nation's first therapeutic vaccine for the fatal virus.

But it warned that patients should not expect a miracle. The vaccine, developed by Dr. Jonas Salk, the inventor of the first polio vaccine, is intended to help people with the HIV virus that causes AIDS healthier longer.

After 12½ hours of debate, the panel of scientists voted 6-3, with one undecided, to recommend that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration allow Phase 3 clinical trials in as many as 5,000 patients of the vaccine, called Immunogen.

"I am not at all excited about the data I've seen," said the committee's chairman, Dr. Stanley Lemon of the University of North Carolina. "But I would be thrilled to be proven wrong." But the advisory committee warned that patients should not expect a miracle from the vaccine, whose effects it said had been exaggerated by its maker, Immune Response Corp. of Carlsbad, Calif.

The panelists agreed that patients with the feeblest immune system should not be included in the trial. While other scientists are testing vaccines to both prevent HIV infection and to treat it, Salk's is the first therapeutic vaccine in development. He took a strain of HIV, stripped it of its protective coating and then inactivated the whole virus.

Two other therapeutic vaccines are being tested with only portions of the virus. The killed virus is then added to a chemical that helps the immune cells recognise an invader, remember what it looks like and fight it off.

The theory is that without this immune-memory boost, HIV can hide in the body and elude immune cells until it has grown strong enough to wipe out the immune system.

Egypt wants \$900m in damages from Sudan

CAIRO (Agencies) — Egypt is demanding \$900 million in compensation from Sudan for its seizure of Egyptian schools and other property in Khartoum, a government newspaper reported on Friday.

Egypt last week submitted to the Sudanese government a "long list" of property which was confiscated "as part of a provocative campaign" and demanded three billion Egyptian pounds in compensation, the Egyptian Gazette said.

The Sudanese government since 1993 has taken control of Egyptian schools and the Khartoum branch of Cairo University saying the moves were part of "the Islamisation of education in the country."

Last year it seized several Egyptian irrigation department offices arguing their leases had expired.

Relations between the two neighbours have been strained since the government of General Omar Al Bashir came to power in June 1989.

A long, simmering dispute over the resource-rich border area of Halaib erupted again in 1991. Egypt accuses Sudan of supporting Islamic militants, while Sudan accused Egypt of backing its opposition exiled in Cairo.

Gen. Bashir was quoted by the government daily Al En-gaz Al Watani on Friday as

telling Egypt's legal opposition that ties had chilled over "measures taken by the Egyptian authorities with the aim of changing the features" of the area, a reference to Halaib.

But Gen. Bashir also told the opposition parties who were in Khartoum on Thursday that Sudan will support Egypt "in any stands it takes for defending its positions and rights against Israeli subversion."

Egypt says it will not renew its adherence to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty if Israel refuses to sign on.

A leading Egyptian opposition leader has recommended that Egypt and Sudan seek international arbitration to resolve their dispute over Halaib.

Ibrahim Shukri, head of the Labour Party, made the suggestion after he and other opposition leaders met Thursday with Gen. Bashir.

Gen. Bashir said that steps taken by Egypt over the Halaib area could have led to a break in diplomatic relations had it not been for Sudanese respect for the Egyptian people.

Halaib, a triangle-shaped border area along the Red Sea, is believed to be rich in minerals.

Under a 1899 treaty with Britain, Halaib was incorporated into Egypt. But in 1902, Egypt gave Sudan administrative powers there.

Bahrain asks Britain to refuse asylum to rebels

LONDON (AFP) — Bahrain on Friday asked Britain to refuse political asylum to three opposition figures here, saying they were terrorists bent on using London as a base to create an Islamic state in Bahrain.

Bahraini Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammad Ben Mubarak Al Khalifa said he asked British counterpart Douglas Hurd to refuse asylum to Sheikh Ali Salman, 30, a leading Shiite cleric who came here with followers last week.

He told reporters after the meeting that Mr. Hurd was non-committal, saying the case was under study.

The three were granted temporary stay in Britain pending a ruling on their request for asylum.

Sheikh Ali's arrest in Bahrain on Dec. 5 touched off the worst political violence the Gulf country has seen since it gained independence from British protection in 1971.

The London-based Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain (IFLB) said a total of 16 people were killed in the unrest, but Bahraini authorities only acknowledged the death of one policeman.

Sheikh Ali Khalifa said he told Mr. Hurd that "terrorist acts being taken (in Bahrain) were led by a few individuals who flew to this country under a banner which looks different from what's really

behind it."

"I think if they are permitted to stay in this country they will organise activities against the law in my country," he said. "The Islamic extremists, they represent a fundamentalist philosophy."

He said the opposition was intent on creating an Islamic state in his country.

Bahrain deported three dissidents to Iran this week, the Bahraini opposition-in-exile said Friday.

Sheikh Mohammad Hassan Ali Hussein Khajasteh, 23, Mohammad Nasser and Ali Mohammad arrived in the Iranian port of Bushehr on Tuesday, said an IFLB member.

The three had been accused of taking part in the clashes between security forces and demonstrators in mid-December, he said.

Shikh Khajasteh was jailed and tortured for 12 days in Hoda Al Jaf prison, the IFLB member charged, adding that no reason had been given for the deportation of the three.

The Emir of Bahrain, Sheikh Isa Ben Salman Al Khalifa, accused "foreign countries" of whipping up unrest, in an interview published in Egypt Friday.

His son, Crown Prince Sheikh Hamad Ben Isa Al Khalifa, accused Iran without naming it of being behind the disturbances which mainly involved Shiite Muslims.

Algeria presidential poll firm — minister

ROME (Agencies) — Presidential elections will be held as scheduled in Algeria this year, possibly in July, Algerian Foreign Minister Mohammad Salah Dembri has said after talks at the Vatican.

"Algeria is not a state in chaos, but a state with institutions which function," he insisted at a press conference here late Thursday.

He added that there was "strictly nothing" to negotiate with the country's political parties.

A number of the bigger parties met here two weeks ago with the banned Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) and proposed their own solution to Algeria's three-year conflict in which more than 100,000 people have been killed. They urged negotiations with the military-backed government and the lifting of emergency measures, including the ban on the FIS, but ruled out elections in the current climate of unrest.

Mr. Dembri, who met Vatican Secretary for Relations with Other States Jean-Louis Tauran, said Algeria would restore the electoral process by staging a presidential poll in 1995, saying "that is an irreversible commitment."

He said the vote might be held as from July since preparations were supposed to be completed by the end of June.

The minister said a government memorandum sent to the legal political parties and other national organisations on Thursday spelt out the need to work together closely on the election law, with amendments and guarantees of proper procedure up for discussion.

"There is strictly nothing to negotiate, but on the other hand we need to ensure good conditions to achieve a fault-free passage leading to restoration of the electoral process," Mr. Dembri said.

"We say to all the political and social formations in Algeria, you should unite to reach a consensus and collective decision (on holding elections) but there is nothing to negotiate with the state or the government."

Vatican spokesman Joaquin Navarro Valls said the foreign minister had briefed Mr. Tauran on the Algerians government's priorities, which included "respect for the constitution, multiparty politics, political rotation, and the organisation of free elections in 1995 with the

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Thousands line up for homes in Kobe

KOBE (Agencies) — Thousands of Japanese left homeless in last week's quake lined up Friday to apply for new housing, and officials opened dozens of new clinics to head off a flu epidemic among the victims.

The Jan. 17 quake killed more than 5,000 people and left about 300,000 homeless. Many of the victims, faced with contagious disease and depression in the crowded and cold shelters, are desperate for the privacy of a home.

On Friday, about 37,000 people waited in line outside tents set up around the city to apply for only 2,289 temporary houses, most of which were built in the last week by the government. The government plans to build another 60,000 units in the coming weeks.

Koichi Taro, a Liberal Democratic Party lawmaker, said in Tokyo the government should accept foreign-built houses for evacuees.

"We must think about all available means to procure houses," he said during a parliamentary budget committee session.

In the latest sign of normalisation in Kobe, a main expressway damaged in the quake was opened Friday, allowing trucks to ferry in

emergency supplies. Traffic on Friday was backed up at some points for up to 30 kilometres between Kobe and nearby Osaka.

The quake wrecked much of the vital industrial heart of the port city. The Ministry of International Trade and Industry said Friday that it would take one or two months to restore industrial water services to the area's companies.

To combat influenza that has swept through the ranks of hundreds of refugees in Kobe's shelters, regional government officials increased the number of makeshift clinics in the city from 23 to 115 on Friday, and increased the number of nurses to more than 400.

Survivors of the worst earthquake in modern Japan said they desperately needed psychological support to deal with traumatic stress and harsh living conditions in makeshift evacuation shelters.

"Although we now have food, water and blankets, we still feel extremely uneasy," said Yasunosuke Soeda, 53, one of about 2,100 evacuees at the Kasugano elementary school in central Kobe.

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Grant resigns as UNICEF head

AMMAN (J.T.) Secretary-General of the United Nations Boutros Boutros Ghali announced Thursday the resignation of James Grant, the executive director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

Mr. Grant, who assumed office as the third executive director of UNICEF with the rank of under-secretary-general of the United Nations, on Jan. 1, 1980, resigned for health reasons which had forced him to undergo several surgical operations in the last couple of years.

In his letter to the secretary general, Mr. Grant said "serving as UNICEF's executive director for 15 years has been the greatest privilege of my life and the capstone of my 50 years of international service."

During his 15 years tenure as head of UNICEF, Mr. Grant has shown an unflinching commitment, vision and dedication to improving the lives of the world's least advantaged: the children of the developing world. Under his leadership, UNICEF has confronted and defied what Mr. Grant called the silent emergency, the daily tragedy of millions of children caught in the relentless downward



James Grant

spiral of poverty, deprivation and environmental degradation.

Each year these conditions cause the deaths of millions and result in many more stunted lives. During Mr. Grant's term, UNICEF has also responded to the loud emergencies, and worked to save the lives of women and children caught in disasters such as earthquakes, famine and war.

In the 1980s, UNICEF launched the child survival and development revolution, which to date, has saved the lives of an estimated 25 million children and prevented disabilities in many more. Its success was predicated on Mr. Grant's unique strategy

to emphasize simple, low cost and practical methods for child welfare and survival like immunisation, oral rehydration and breastfeeding. That inspired a worldwide movement by mobilising the political will necessary to bring these remedies to the millions of children and mothers threatened by preventable disease and malnutrition.

The World Summit for Children in 1990, the first meeting of its kind where world leaders met to address serious social issues, stands out as one of the main highlights of his career. The summit set 27 child health and welfare goals that have been incorporated into the national plans of more than 100 countries.

Mr. Grant's strategy of setting specific, measurable goals, lobbying tirelessly for their achievement, and monitoring and publicising progress towards them, has been remarkably effective. In the decade and a half he has spent at the head of UNICEF, he has personally met with more than 100 heads of state or government, including many of the Arab World, to enlist their personal and political support for the achievement of specific goals for children.

CAIRO (AFP) — The Egyptian Human Rights Association (EHA) has urged the Egyptian government to protect the rights of journalists and to ensure freedom of opinion and information. The group said that the government should not restrict laws which could be used to punish people for their opinions. It also urged the government to ensure that journalists have the right to travel and to work in the country without being placed under any kind of restriction. The group said that the government should also ensure that journalists are not harassed or threatened for their work. It also urged the government to ensure that journalists are not subjected to any kind of discrimination or unfair treatment. The group said that it would continue to monitor the situation and to report any violations to the public.

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